

Their Minds Will Follow:
Examining the Role of Voters' Emotions When Formulating Attitudes on Campaign Issues in the
2004 and 2008 Presidential Elections

By
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Abstract

Emotions and voters' feelings in political contexts are not typically the focal point of voting behavior research. Political science has traditionally emphasized the rational component of voting behavior. Classic scholars posited that voters functioned like rational actors, who were motivated to maximize personal utility and benefit to make a political decision. Only after the discipline's Behavioral Revolution was scholars' attention captured by the effect of emotions on voting behavior. Little attention, however, was given to how emotions influenced voters' choices. Most research focused on how candidates' personalities facilitated specific emotional contexts in which voters responded.

Analyzing survey data from the American National Elections Studies (ANES) for the Presidential elections of 2004 and 2008, this study seeks to understand differences in the ANES emotional indicators from each election. Drawing on the conventional wisdom that suggests emotions influence attitude formation and perceptions of reality, this dissertation accounts for changes in the national political mood between 2004 and 2008. Additionally, this project examines the special case of how emotions mattered among women and African-American voting blocks in the 2008 Presidential campaign. The unique political context 2008 furnishes three unique variables of interest; the first American presidential campaign to feature a Black man as a front-runner nominee, second, women made inroads showcased by Hillary Clinton's competitive Democratic Primary, and the Republican Party nominated its first woman vice presidential candidate.

The scope of this research focused on the voter's personal emotional reactions to a presidential candidate by addressing this question; do voters' feelings toward a candidate influence his or her attitudes about campaign issues? This project builds upon the theory of Affective Intelligence by applying of the transfer-of-affect thesis to argue that voters' emotional responses to candidates are interpreted as salient information that guides a vote choice. The results suggest that voters transfer their feelings about a certain candidate onto campaign issues and rely on their emotional assessments of a candidate to evaluate a campaign issue.

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Chapter 1: Emotions and the Political Environment

‘Hard-cider campaigning’ is what it was called during the Jacksonian era when political campaigns were the primary vehicles of mass entertainment. The 19th century campaign was a natural spectacle, which frequently distracted voters’ attention away from the campaign issues. A typical campaign featured parades, floats, marching bands and rallies that included impressive line-ups of entertainment that showcased glee clubs, barbecues, picnics and free whisky, which were used liberally to stir voters’ passions (Davidson et al. 1991). One Kentucky politician is believed to have said that electoral success depended on the understanding that “the way to men’s hearts is down their throats.”¹ Political life for the average 19th century voter was engulfed by incentives that intentionally incited voters’ emotions, passions and appetites in a manner that yielded anything but a substantive foundation to inform political choices (Davidson et.al 1991).

Emotions are an enduring feature of American elections. Yet, the historical methods used to invoke voters’ emotions do not necessarily correspond to those of the present. Politics are inherently emotional and political history suggests that impassioned politics were ‘politics as usual’. Few observers of contemporary American elections will deny that feelings are important elements in campaigns and voters’ choices. In contemporary settings, emotions are on display in the media and political campaigns use continual emotional appeals to impress voters. In the contemporary campaign environment, voters are inundated with emotional cues from competing sources, which are often magnified by the effects of new technologies. The consequences of the uses of advanced technologies makes campaigns appear to be more emotional. This research examines the enduring emotional culture of politics and when reviewing the research available

¹ Library of Congress; www.loc.gov-- primary documents-election and voting collection. Campaign documents, pamphlets and newspapers.

on the role of emotions in politics, a research question emerged *do voters feelings toward political candidates influence their support of campaign issues?*

This research question is examined through three significant themes. First, although emotions play a prevalent role in politics, the actual influence is rarely given serious consideration. The traditional treatment of emotion in political science is that any deliberative reason and rational choice approach necessarily excludes emotion. Second, attention to political contexts is important when studying the influences of voters' feelings in their political choices. This project follows the vindication and re-examination of the role feelings in politics. This research suggests that emotion is variable to add to voting behavior research. Third, feelings are not solely cognitive motivators of political action, but are active in candidate and issue appraisal. The political environment activates feelings because it is a space where voters experience them. Surveys tap into those feelings expressed in response to cues from the political environment.

The Political Antagonist: Feelings

Emotions are traditionally the antagonistic actors in classic political behavior research. Open and competitive elections coupled with citizen participation shapes virtually all ideas about democracy. There are certain expectations and assumptions underscoring conceptualizations about the democratic participation of citizens and often, the role of emotions is noticeably absent. Plato wrote that humans needed to be guided by “undistorted ethical truths, suppress passionate appetites, and desire rational things such as knowledge and justice” (Plato *The Republic* [1992]). Plato's legacy helped Western culture redefine the practice and expectations of democratic citizenship. Such conceptualizations articulated expectations that voters were to act as impartial judges by practicing critical and rational deliberation when presented with political choices. Democratic theory explains that public policy reflects voters' aggregate preferences and those

preferences can only be fully articulated by rational actors who are fully aware of their goals and political aims (Dahl 1973; 1998). The expectation is that healthy democracies are systems where office holders reflect the expressed preferences of its constituents and voters hold a sense of civic obligation to participate in the process as an informed, dutiful citizen. By interpreting feelings as an undesirable element of voting because feelings are thought to invoke irrational biases that are best held at bay reinforce standard expectations of classical democratic theory.

While this premise is an ideal situation for a healthy democracy, scholars grow frustrated at the evidence of lackluster citizens. If voter preferences are to be adequately translated into public policies, then the reflection of those policies are only as good as the citizens who express their opinions. This expectation communicates the burden transferred onto the voter to be an informed participant in order to secure the most reliable expression of policy preference.

Classic democratic theory forces upon us a choice between reason and emotion. The former enables us to imagine Plato's world driven by the rational desire for freedom, justice and rights equitably enjoyed and protected. According to Marcus (2002) the latter allows us to reach and motivate people, but to the ire of rationalists, without the guide of reason. Various emotions have influence on different policy consequences, and different emotions affect the interpersonal nature of how people work together in a democracy (Hatemi and McDermott 2012). This is why emotions are interpreted as a destructive force that leads voters to irrational judgments. Barry (1995) defines the rational citizen in terms of the benefits experienced in a democracy, which includes emancipation from certain social obligations (referring to political bosses) and partisan loyalties, along with the civic obligation to evaluate political information impartially.

Aristotle's classic thesis declared that humans are inherently political animals guided by the rational urge to commune with others in order to establish government. The Greek

philosophers emphasized reason as the supreme virtue of human sophistication. Marcus (2002) agrees with Aristotle that humans are creatures naturally attracted to social association, but disagrees that social attachments in political society are guided by rational urges. Rather, those communal bonds are emotional connections because emotion, according to Marcus, is an explicit requirement of citizenship. Emotion plays a central role in bonding voters to the parties, the issues, and ultimately, elected officials. This is assisted in contemporary politics through the frequent uses of symbolism to forge emotional bonds among voters in a democracy (Edelman 1978; Marcus 2002)

The theoretical expectation that citizens share an equal sense of civic duty and responsibility to participate in a democracy in a critical and informed way has not translated into stable trends in public opinion overtime. This has led to frustrations among researchers within political science. Frustrations are explained by implicating citizens' lack of ideological commitment or knowledge of political issues. The problem that emerged in the study of political behavior was how opinion trends in survey research were interpreted. Some scholars interpreted the lack of stable trends to point to the questionable quality of voters. Not until psychological models emerged were these issues addressed. The first models of political behavior emerged in the *American Voter* (1960) and later in the *Civic Culture* (1976). Not before had the idea of the impact of voters' feelings on their attitudes toward politics been addressed. The evolution of the study of emotions in politics has been informed by interdisciplinary efforts to study the role of emotions in human cognition.

A Vindication of the Role of Feelings in Politics

During the 1950s, the Behavioral Revolution revised the set of expectations for democratic citizenship. The result was a criticism of voting behavior that ignored the influence

of voters' feelings. Recent research on voting behavior has revisited the role of feelings in politics. New research, informed by social psychology, provides a foundation for political science to reinterpret emotions as less irrational, more complex and a reasonable influence on political decision-making. In this research, feelings are presented as a politically valid cognitive tool assisting voters in negotiating the complexities of contemporary campaigns. Feelings have a useful role in helping voters evaluate political candidates when bombarded with overwhelming amounts of information about a political campaign, issue or a candidate.

The political context of a campaign is important to the activation of emotional appraisals. The political environment reflects the influences of the candidates' personalities, the campaign issues and the tone of media coverage. The culture of modern politics has been transformed by the increased displays of emotion; opinion broadcast news and viewpoint publications along with increased access to social media. The nature of the media and the political environment associated with low-information campaigns and uninformed voters seem to provide the context where displays of emotion resonate more deeply in the minds of voters than critical deliberation.

The Effects of the Media

While not the emphasis of this project, the effects of the media are palpable and need to be acknowledged. During political campaigns, the media tend to concentrate on the secondary qualities of candidates and exaggerate political personalities. Research on the influence of media on public opinion suggests that the media influences the direction of public opinion, particularly when the media reframe secondary topics to become mainstream news coverage, the media holds the capacity to influence the tone of political discourse and the criteria voters employ to make political judgments.

In the 2004 presidential campaign, the media reportedly amplified Bush's negative personality traits by dwelling on his public faux pas and politically awkward statements. Media frames likely exaggerated the influence of the faith-based and organized interests that represented the conservative Republican base and suggested a much larger conservative social movement than actually existed (Campbell 2007).

Conversely, in 2008, Obama received enthusiastic and overwhelmingly positive media coverage, possibly leading to similar exaggerations that benefitted Obama's presidential campaign. However, it is not suggested that the 2008 media coverage overstated the enthusiasm of the voters, but the emphasis here is the influence the media have on the political environment to under or overstate the actual status of events and issues on the campaign.

Personalities and Identities in Politics

Classic research in political psychology suggested that political outcomes are a consequence of certain personality types (Greenstein 1967; Sniderman 1974). Previous research routinely emphasized the influence of personality on the power of persuasion. However, recent studies have re-examined the politics of personalities by focusing on voters' responses to specific character traits of candidates (Caprara et al. 2006). It is now accepted that some candidate's personalities significantly influence voters' political choices. Schwartz's (1992) theory of basic personal values examines the role an individual's values system plays in assessing personal preferences. Schwartz's theory found applications in research on candidate likeability. Research suggests that when voters assess a candidate, he or she searches for a candidate that they feel a personal connection with based candidate traits that reflect his or her personally held beliefs. A voter tends to like the candidate who reflects his or her own set of values and beliefs (including ideology) because he or she feels connected to that candidate on a level that does not involve

impartial deliberation about issues, it is a more personal preference that bonds them to a candidate (Caprara et al. 2006).

Political psychology, coupled with theories of ideological polarization, (Jacobson 2005; Sabato 2006) proposes that personalities and identities matter in voting behavior. Voters prioritize their connection with a candidate on a personal level over the importance of campaign issues (Ceasar and Busch 2005). Because of this, surveys demonstrate that voters express emotional responses toward candidates based on certain personality traits showcased during the campaign.

In 2004, a convincing case was made that George W. Bush's personality greatly influenced the electoral outcome. The country was mostly united on action regarding Iraq and Afghanistan and national security, but voters' feelings expressed toward Bush suggested that more than campaign issues were influencing the polarization of the American electorate. Bush's personality had two effects. First, he galvanized the GOP conservative party base with his open confession of Christian faith. Second, his open testimony of faith endeared the conservative base to him at the same time it repulsed Democrats. Democrats criticized Bush claiming it was a strategy to distract voters with wedge issues concerning reproductive policy and same-sex marriage (Ceasar and Busch 2005; Sabato 2006).

In the 2008 Democratic primaries, the electorate energetically divided its support for the two frontrunners Hillary Clinton and Barak Obama, who both were favored by diverse, yet important voting blocks. Hillary Clinton's candidacy had a polarizing effect on the Democratic Party base. Women supported Clinton, but the larger concern was the political behavior of the African-American and minority voters who had been long Clinton supporters. Ultimately, we know the outcome. The 2008 presidential campaign activated assessments of identities in the

electorate unlike any other time in presidential history. Race was forefront of the campaign and the energized mobilization of the electorate facilitated positive assessment of racial identities in that campaign. The excitement generated by Obama's candidacy played an important role in how voters conceptualized and judged race.

A Guide to the Project

One of the goals of this research is to address the following question--*do voters' feelings toward political candidates influence their support of campaign issues?* This question reflects the importance placed on the idea that emotions influence political judgments--not just about candidates, but how those feelings are transferred to voters' assessments of campaign issues. This research provides a new understanding for the role that feelings have in making political judgment that draws on the findings of *The American Voter*. This project adds a new variable to the list of durable predictors used in voting behavior research. This study advances a new way of viewing the role of emotion in political contexts and how voters utilize their emotional responses toward candidates to inform their own attitudes on campaign issues.

The outline of this project proceeds in the following way--chapter 2 is a synthesized review of the traditional theoretical approaches in political science of voting behavior and cognitive theories of emotion. The contributions of the classic theoretical approach are acknowledged and validated for their importance in guiding research on political behavior. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach for this project and explains the measurements of the feelings hope, pride, anger and fear, as provided by the ANES survey, along with the theoretical foundations of measuring emotion.

The analysis conducted in chapters 4 and 5 directly addresses the research question. The chapters concurrently analyze voters' feelings expressed toward the presidential candidates in the

2004 and 2008 campaigns. The examination of each campaign offers a comparative analysis of the research question comparing the two very different electoral contexts. The chapters offer a deep examination of the specific political environments that underpinned voters' emotional judgments of the candidates and how those feelings were transferred to evaluations of campaign issues. Both chapters 4 and 5 examine how electoral subgroups such as women and racial minorities split their judgments along definitive gendered and racial lines. In chapter 5, the analysis provides evidence that there were additional racial voting splits in 2008.

Chapter 6 compiles the key findings produced by this research project. The chapter reviews the important insights gained from the evidence that explains how voters rely on their feelings toward a candidate to inform other attitudes involved in making political choices. The findings have implications for future presidential campaigns and finally, end with a discussion of the potential consequences of emotion in the 2012 presidential campaign.

Chapter 2: A Review of the Literature: Emotions and Voting Behavior

If the mind is the market place of ideas, then politics is the market place of emotions (Westen 2007). The central research question guiding this project is situated firmly in the market place of emotions. Political environments can be highly emotive for several reasons, whether political campaigns were sources of 19th century social entertainment or just contemporary political strategy; a common agreement among political scholars is that elections are becoming more laden with emotive tactics.

Traditionally, in political science research, emotions are dismissed as negative conduits to irrational and destructive consequences for the democratic citizenry. Only recently have researchers determined that emotions demonstrate utility in cognitive processes, which do not lead to unreasonable or destructive outcomes (Marcus et al. 2000; Westen 2007). The idealized view of democracy streams from a conceptualization of the dispassionate citizen. However, Aristotle referred to humans as ‘political animals’, and it is worth mentioning that all animals have varied levels of habits and instincts necessary for social and literal survival. Humans possess a sophisticated cognitive system, in which emotions serve a vital adaptive function that aids in human acclimation and adaptability. Whether it is navigating prehistoric society for literal survival or maneuvering the political environment of presidential elections, humans interpret their emotional responses as critical information (Marcus 2000; 2002).

During political campaigns, voters are not receptive to each and every political message. Rather, voters filter information through their own values and emotion-laden beliefs about what policies society should adopt (Watson and Tellegen 1985; Redlawsk 2006). This is the marketplace of emotions where candidates maneuver and manipulate information in order to convince voters to associate campaign messages with their already internalized value-laden

worldview (Caprara et.al 2007). By securing emotional bonds between themselves and voters, a candidate increases his or her likelihood of getting elected.

This project is associated with voting behavior research that vindicates the role of emotions in political research. Like studies conducted prior to this project, feelings are demonstrated as rational and constructive mechanisms that sustain political cognition and generate reasonable voter choices. This chapter provides an overview of the important scholarly contributions that crafted the foundation upon which this research situated. The first section outlines and acknowledges the traditional approaches in political science research, which have long guided studies of voting behavior in American politics. The next section examines interdisciplinary work that demonstrates emotions are key components in decision-making with important implications for political behavior. The emotional elements in the political environment, which are often subject to manipulation and the related strategies, are discussed. After that, the two theoretical approaches central to this research project, affective intelligence theory and the affect transfer thesis are discussed. Finally, the special case for studying the electoral behavior of women and African American voters in politics and implications are discussed.

This project examines the question about how voters' feelings toward candidates influence their judgments on campaign issues. This research tests the concept that emotion is a significant source of political knowledge, which is then translated into a political choice. Building on the contributions from interdisciplinary research, this project looks at the role of emotion in the cognition and evaluation processes of information.

Traditional Approaches to Researching Voting Behavior

Niemi and Weisberg (2001) claim that fundamentally, the study of voting behavior is about what determines a vote. There are two schools of thought that guide research questions about what determines a voter's choice. One perspective is a rational choice approach and the other is a psychological approach. Both have influenced the entire field of political science and continue to influence voting behavior research.

Conventional expectations of voters in American politics assumed that they make decisions based on a habitually meticulous and critical calculus predicated on utilitarian explanations of decision-making (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1978). These and more recent interpretations of economic voting models state that all political behavior has a purpose and done for specific reasons (Lowi et al. 2010). Simply, voters have goals and work to achieve those goals through political means. Rational political behavior operates on an assumption that voters engage in a process by which they weigh the risks of their political options and think through the costs and benefits of their political decisions while speculating about future effects (Lowie et al. 2010). This formulates the expectation that voters, under the rubric of rational choice, evaluate their choices by a process of forethought, deliberation and calculation that is commonly referred to, by political scientists, as voter sophistication.

While economic voting models may confront voters with a cognitively burdensome standard, psychological approaches comparable to the one advanced in *The American Voter* (1960), redefine voter sophistication in more accessible terms. Campbell et al. (1960) claim that party identification is just one among several psychological components that voters rely upon to make political choices. Party identification is defined as the “psychological identification, which can persist without legal recognition or evidence of formal membership and even without a

consistent record of party support” (Campbell et al. 121, 1960). Party identification is a cornerstone of electoral politics and voting behavior research because it is the single most effective predictor of vote choice (Campbell et al., 1960, Converse 1964,2000, Niemi and Weisberg 1993, Greene 1999, Brewer 2005). According to the *American Voter*, party identification is also important for its utility in studying other aspects of the American political system. Party identification signals a reasonably stable voter and under normal electoral circumstances, a predisposed loyalty to a party organization (Wattenberg 1998; Converse 2000).

A political party, as an organization, functions as a source of political information that delivers cues to voters, which, in turn, they utilize to evaluate the validity of political campaigns, candidates and issues (Campbell et al. 1960; Wattenberg 1998; Miller and Shanks 1996). The concept of party identification has provided a traditional framework to understand voting behavior. Research suggests that over time partisanship is a relatively stable political identity (Converse et al. 1960, Wattenberg 1998, Converse 2000). This offers a positive outlook for the stability of democracy because steady partisanship serves as a “stabilizing influence on public opinion and consequently on the political system” (Wattenberg 1998, 10). Considering economic voting models, the theoretical framework offered by the psychological model of voting offers a re-conceptualized notion of what voter sophistication means.

The psychological framework of political behavior advanced by Campbell et al. also explain other important psychological devices used by voters when making political judgments. *The American Voter* makes the distinction between party affiliation and voter ideology. Ideology is a key component in formulated political attitudes. There are various ways to understand and interpret the meaning of ideology. Scholars concede that the term is well worn and therefore suffers from distortion (Converse 1964). The earliest operationalization of the term comes from

the Campbell et al. (1960) and describes the function of ideology as idea, which “connects various facets of social, political and economic experiences.” (Converse et al. 192, 1960) It supplies the individual a ‘attitude structure’ that gives meaning to a series of particular events observed in politics, “which are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence” (Converse 207, 1964). In short, ideology is a tool of political summary. More recent iterations have simply referred to the familiar political continuum of the ‘left’ and ‘right’ or the liberal and conservative. Contemporary interpretations have narrowed the function of ideology a bit more to mean “a set of beliefs about the role of government that shapes responses to a wide range of specific policy issues” (Green and Coffey 303, 2007)

The Emotional Components of Political Judgment

While *The American Voter* advanced a model of psychological interpretation of party identification, research from the field of psychology and social psychology examined the questions of direct influence of emotions on cognition. The scholarship contributed to political science through interdisciplinary means established an important connection in politics, a cognitive connection between thinking and feeling.

Kinder (1986) first suggested investigating the emotional underpinnings of the public’s reactions to candidates because candidates often mobilize the masses by appealing to values, group associations and identities (all which evoke emotion). For reasons unclear, the question had not been actively considered in specific contexts until Marcus (1988) conducted his first study of emotion in the election of 1984. Other significant contributions made about the operation of the brain came from neuroscience, which informs much of the research about emotion and decision-making. It is necessary to understand the structure and function of emotion by knowing the managing sub-systems of emotion inside the brain’s sophisticated neurological

network. There are two independent emotional subsystems that are important to understand in this research. They are the dispositional and surveillance systems, which enable humans to manage thoughts and consciousness along with the capacity of adaptability (Marcus et al. 2000; Redlawsk 2006). While the dispositional system monitors daily activities, the surveillance system monitors novelties and threats introduced into the surrounding environment.

Borrowing from psychology and neuroscience, political scientists have tested the function of emotional reactions in political contexts (Granberg and Brown 1989; Marcus and MacKuen 1998; Marcus et al. 2000; Marcus 2000; Marcus 2002; Redlawsk 2006). Findings suggest that individuals know how they feel about a particular political party, candidate, policy or issue before they can articulate their cognitive arguments. When considering the role emotions play in political behavior, researchers indicate that measuring emotional responses may be more effective instruments for description of voting choices than cognitive studies (Granberg and Brown, 1989). Research in psychology furnished the connection between thinking and feeling, “while feelings and thoughts both involve energy and information, the first class of experiences is heavier on energy, whereas the second is heavier on information” (Inhelder and Piaget 1958, 347).

According researcher R.B. Zajonc (1980), it was previously assumed that cognition occurred separately, a part from feeling, “in nearly all cases, however, feeling is not free of thought, nor is thought free of feelings” (Zajonc 1980; 154). Another important foundation established by Zajonc’s research determined that individuals require little understanding of a stimulus before emotional responses are activated, “objects need to be cognized very little-in fact, minimally” (Zajonc 1980; 154). In addition feelings are dependent on environmental cues. Context assigns meaning to emotions experienced in specific environments. When emotional

evaluations occur, the primary cognitive process always involves feeling before thinking. Environmental inputs are extremely important to take into account because an individual's preliminary response to the environment is emotional. The evaluation of the environment then governs subsequent choices made about appropriate actions to take. The implications of the cognitive connection between feeling and thinking in political contexts will potentially re-conceptualize approaches to studying voting behavior.

Zajonc's research helps establish several valuable points. First, once an emotional judgment is made, it is rarely reversible because of the level of individual confidence expressed in one's own feeling toward an object or stimulus. It simply "feels" valid and humans like to trust their own feelings (or "instinct") on decisions. Second, emotional responses are immediate and automatic, they occur outside of conscious awareness, which also insinuates that its highly improbable that an individual can actively suppress immediate emotional judgment. Third, emotional judgments are not necessarily guided or dependent upon cognition. This implies that emotion may be independent of cognition, but guides cognitive responses.

Attention to the role that emotion plays in political decision-making does not overtly characterize it as a heuristic, but it demonstrates some heuristic-like attributes (Kuklinski and Quirk 2000; 2001). This, coupled with Zajonc's contributions, suggests that there may be cognitive limitations to information processing. When the brain and sensory receptors are overwhelmed with stimuli, the adaptive function is to employ cognitive short cuts or heuristics. Often times, emotions perform this function. Lau and Redlawsk (2006) state that, "people generally want to make good decisions --- they just cannot do so in the idealized manner described by models for rational processing" (Lau and Redlask 2006, 25). Voters are not incapable of making reasonable choices, as the implications of previous studies challenge

researchers to redefine the perception of what makes a reasonable and rational political judgment.

To understand how emotion ultimately relates to political cognition and the political environment, we first must understand the mechanisms of cognition and cognitive evaluation. The rational voter research presents models that suggest voters evaluate information in a detached manner. Interdisciplinary research suggests that this is not always the case. Contributions made by psychology and political science suggests that cognitive processes are not independent of emotional guidance.

While the conscious mind is otherwise occupied with routine cognitive processes, emotions enable parts of the human mind, also referred to as “adaptive unconscious,” to process and judge the physical world quickly, enabling quick decision-making (Wilson and Bar-Anan, 2008). Psychology experiments reveal that people’s “automatic responses correspond poorly to their self reported attitudes” (Wilson and Bar-Anan, 2008). Psychologists theorize that people cannot access the multiplicity of mental functions simultaneously. The brain is a machine of efficiency and related mental processes does not readily expose full self-awareness. Therefore, emotion is an important device in human decision making when navigating the physical world. There are similarities in political contexts and in making political decisions.

Research conducted on the intensity of emotion as a motivational state provides insights about the magnitude of influence of negative and positive emotions (Brehm 1999). Some emotions arouse motivational states when others do not. Brehm defines a motivational state as an urge that one has to respond in a certain way (Brehm 1999; 2). It is further surmised that negative emotions are characterized as ‘active’ emotions and positive emotions are characterized as ‘passive’ emotions. Brehm’s research suggests that positive emotions are equally as intense as

negative emotions. This finding underscores George Marcus's theories on the role emotions play in political contexts.

Other research on political judgment has employed concepts from political psychology, mainly personality analyses (of candidates) coupled with considerations about emotional responses to candidates' personalities. It is important to understand that personalities in politics are important to voters' political judgment. Emerging theories purport that political environments envelop more of these kinds of judgments rather than absorbing cues and evaluating information. Ultimately, voters make decisions about people, not information, and therefore, measuring emotion is also analyzing the underlying cognitive complexities that are simultaneously happening when voters are making decisions about a candidate.

Feelings are Context Dependent

The standard political science literature routinely dismissed the potential contributions of understanding the influence emotions have on voting behavior. Scholars treated emotion as an undesirable element to political decision-making. However, interdisciplinary research on the role of feelings in cognitive processes, results in renewed exploration in political science to examine how emotions influence voters' decisions. Emotion in politics is more prevalent than previous research has demonstrated. This section will outline the various theories on cognition, the automaticity of human preferences and finally how these findings translate to political life.

The theories of cognition in political contexts examine how voters respond to political symbols, candidates and political issues (Marcus et al. 2000). Normative theories of voting have explained that partisans make decisions by relying on commitments to long-term factors, whereas independents and weak partisans are more receptive to short-term factors (Marcus and Mackuen, 2000)

Interdisciplinary research tends to demonstrate that emotions play an important role in politics. Defining the political context is necessary to understanding how emotions matter in making political judgments. In the American context understanding politics as a democratic process tends to be a traditional view advanced by scholars such as Robert Dahl (1998). Dahl defined effective participation, voting, and political information as key elements to the democratic process. At the center of this discussion of democracy and its preferable democratic traits are the expectations of the voter. The endeavor to understand voters produced two schools of academic thought (the Columbia and Michigan schools of thought) dedicated to understanding and interpreting voting behavior in American elections.

Most research addressing the subject of feelings in cognitive assessment is interdisciplinary and has recently experienced an infusion into political science. Most studies researching political cognition fail to interpret the importance of emotional responses to political cues. At this stage, enough research has been conducted to establish that emotions hold a valuable place in the political environment (Marcus et al. 2000; 2002; Redlawsk 2006).

Over time, traditional cognitive models critiqued voter behavior, particularly non-partisan behavior, as unstable, unreliable and ultimately unsophisticated (Marcus 2002, Redlawsk 2006). However, cognitive models may not have delved deeply enough to study the psychological forces involved in such attachments like party identification and in this case, vote choices. Cognitive models were not expansive enough to capture all the inner-workings of the voters' minds, "any attempt to explain political action by considering only its cognitive roots is certain to result in only a partial explanation"(Redlask 2006).

Since voters are expected to make decisions at the ballot box, studying the process in which this decision is realized involves several complicated components that are at work

simultaneously. There is a large body of knowledge that has explored and tested the question of how voters make their choices. Until recently, much of the political science research ignored emotions in information processing possibly because studying the emotional components of cognition is difficult when emotional reactions (in political contexts) are difficult to verbalize.

Manipulations of the Political Environment

Data provided by research in psychology indicate that most expressions of feeling are in response to a contextually defined environment, which is subject to manipulation. This is salient to voting behavior research. As noted previously, with the incorporation of advanced technologies and social media into the modern political campaign, it gives the appearance that campaigns are more emotive than in previous decades. One possible explanation is that the political environment is subject to manipulation by varied strategies, which compete for voters' attention and, more specifically, their feelings. Many environmental manipulations are transmitted through the media. The media have an effect on how voters view the world. When the first presidential debate was televised in 1960, voters started relating to the candidate as a person instead of the party organization and its issues.

Along with family and schools, the media are a vehicle of political socialization transmitting images and rhetoric that shapes the political culture and campaign environments in which voters make political decisions (Vermeer 1995). The emotive disposition of broadcast media made clear the way media transmits political cues; social expectations of emotionally framed stories about candidates and political issues ensued. Since the United States has nationwide media, voters in all regions of the country respond to similar perceptions of what it means to be an American and what criteria should be applied in judging political activity (Bradley, Cuthbert and Lang 1996; Bartsch, Vorderer, Mangold and Viehoff 2008). Political scholars

identify such trends as the electoral effects of media bias (Gentzkow and Shapiro 2005; Bernhardt, Krasa and Polborn 2008).

The electoral effects of social media are undergoing examination as this research is being done. Social media through venues such as Facebook, Twitter and others that offer feeds to continuous conversation are a new area being exploited by political campaigns and activists. However, private citizens are also utilizing social media to disseminate their own personal attitudes and opinions. One observation about the effects of social media is that it has the potential to facilitate and engage highly emotive (and more ideologically pure) voters rather than other media environments. Voters utilizing social media such as Twitter may be disseminating more politically and ideologically extreme attitudes that would not be exposed otherwise through broadcast media or radio talk shows (Gilbert and Karahalios 2009; Bollen, Pepe and Mao 2011). The implications are that social media potentially reflect an extreme political mood and the electoral effects are still unknown.

The media are but one vehicle that delivers emotional cues to the electorate. Presidential campaigns orchestrate the advertising and publicity (personal appearances) to reach as many voters as possible while retaining control over the content of the messages. Presidential campaigns try to manipulate the media into reporting on what the campaign dictates and what will be most helpful to advancing the campaign (Vermeer 1995; Scher 1997). There is a new range of media to manipulate on the campaign trail from celebrity talk shows (e.g. *The View*) to entertainment news (e.g. *The Daily Show*). The effects of this type of political orchestration are that it promotes a candidate-based focus, which translates into criteria for candidate evaluation.

Another element that manipulates the political environment is the strategy involved in political campaign advertisements. The campaign advertisement is a highly sophisticated tool used to manipulate a political campaign. Studies (Rudd 1986, Kaid, Leland, and Whitney 1992;

Brians and Wattenberg 1996; Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 1997) show that political ads activate a multiplicity of cognitive functions simultaneously that demonstrates manipulation of voters' perceptions and the campaign environment alike.

The effects of campaign advertisements facilitate and enhance candidate-based judgments, which are influenced by how campaign ads and other information is packaged with music and imagery (Brader 2005). The advertisements stir emotions through the use of symbolic images and patriotic music. Emotions are central to how campaign ads work. According to Brader (1999; 2005), the electoral impacts of campaign ads are highly significant. The strategy that campaign ads use with combining symbolic images with music does manipulate voters emotions and, in doing so, impacts voting behavior. The effect is indirect because while the ads are emotionally provocative, they do not simply lead a voter to a direct choice, but they manipulate the environment in which voters make choices (Johnston and Kaid 2002).

This is important to the overall political context of presidential campaigns, as previous research demonstrates that campaigns strategically target segments of the electorate in ways to maximize margins of victory. In the general campaign cycle, advertising targets are bombarded by political information in a variety of forms. Regarding campaign ads, research also shows a rapid decay rate of advertising effects (Gerber et al. 2011). Voters tend to forget the details of information they receive after they have formed an opinion. It is suggested that the information, which underscores the political judgment is discarded rather quickly (Lau and Redlawsk 2006; Redlawsk 2007). Given this reality, campaign strategies reflect a saturation tactic during the weeks before an election as means to sustain the effects of advertising. Furthermore, it punctuates the importance of emotion on the function of a voter's memory. Sustaining a positive memory regarding a candidate, results in a higher evaluation and lower likelihood of defecting

from that candidate in the voting decision (Redlawsk 2006). The positive and negative memories of a candidate maintained by voters are products of their information search. In the context of modern campaigns, the political environment is subject to varied manipulations that influence the information on which voters base their choices.

Affective Intelligence Theory and the Affect Transfer Thesis

This project is guided by two theoretical approaches, which establish a connection between the traditional and recent research on voting behavior. The Affective Intelligence Theory (Marcus et al. 2000) and the Transfer-of-Affect thesis (Huddy and Gunthorsdottir 2000) are two theoretical frameworks that concentrate on human feelings as a key component guiding political judgment. Here, I offer a brief overview of the theory of affective intelligence and that it established how feelings are important in political contexts. Next, I review the Affect Transfer thesis and why it is particularly important to this research. The central research question focuses on how voters interpret their own feelings as political information. The thesis offers an explanation for how voters transfer their emotional judgments of candidates to their judgments of campaign issues. As previously noted, research in political science on voting behavior and public opinion considered emotions at the center of inquiry, but emotions were construed as irrational and largely destructive. This negative view of emotion, as a superficial response in politics, was a traditional view in democratic theory.

Previous research suggests that emotional responses to candidates are evidently correlated with political behavior and political opinions (Granberg and Brown 1989, Marcus and MacKuen 1998). Also consistent with the findings from previous psychological research, these political studies demonstrate that affective feelings exhibited the characteristic immediacy and automaticity of emotional responses apart from cognition in respondent reactions to political

‘situations’ encountered. Granberg and Brown (1989) observed that survey respondents described that they may or may not have ‘liked’ a candidate, but could not immediately explain their reasons. Their findings support the observed phenomenon in psychology studies that purport the immediacy of affect before cognition. Regardless of cognition, their findings still determine that voting behavior can perhaps be better understood by studying individual emotional responses to stimuli in the political environment. Most studies on emotional reactions to political candidates replicate one another and test emotional responses to candidates or parties to explain political behavior (such as voting).

The theory of affective intelligence “is a theory about how emotion and reason interact to produce a thoughtful and attentive citizenry” (Marcus et al. 2000, 1). It is a theory that draws on a combination of research provided by neuroscience, physiology and experimental psychology. Marcus et al. explain that through interactions of feeling and thinking many voters rely on their emotions as a source of political information to evaluate candidates in a political environment. The theory also emphasizes that the mental processes of feeling and thinking are not adversarial, but complementary (Marcus et al. 2000; 2002; 2006). One effective model that demonstrates the utility of the affective intelligence theory is Marcus’s *Emotional Citizen* model (2002). It illustrates the infusion of thinking with feeling, which is inevitably translated into political judgments. Research expresses difficulty in satisfying questions about the nature of voters, however those questions are made easier to examine couched upon the affective intelligence theory. George Marcus’s careful analysis of the dispositional and surveillance cognitive systems in specific political contexts such as the presidential elections of 1984 and 1988 suggest that political communication is made powerful through contextual manipulation (Marcus et al. 2000). This theory answers previous critics on questions about how the feeling and thinking connection

works in cognition, with the added utility of understanding how it works in political contexts. This project examines the influences of voters' emotional responses toward presidential candidates within the political environment of a national campaign. Marcus's research offers a theoretical link between thinking and feeling that holds implications for other political judgments made by voters, in this particular project, judgments made about specific campaign issues.

Critiques of research on emotions in politics pivot around an observation that the emotional-cognitive link cannot be modeled in statistical software due to the limited understanding of human cognition (Simon 1967; Marcus et al. 1996; 2000). Marcus's affective intelligence theory and emotional citizen model answers critiques about the lack of understanding of human cognition. We are closer to modeling the linkage between feeling and thinking. This project builds upon Marcus's theoretical foundation and is enhanced by the application of the affect transfer thesis.

The Transfer-of-Affect thesis (Huddy and Gunthorsdottir 2000) is particularly applicable in this research because it holds a great deal of explanatory power for how voters may utilize their own feelings to make political judgments. When studying the process of transferring emotion from one object onto another, the cognitive process of attribution has occurred; Voters transfer their own feelings expressed toward a candidate to their judgments about issues associated with a candidate's campaign. This thesis is drawn from the results of a psychological experiment that tested attribution of emotion experienced after being exposed to affective imagery. The thesis explores the assumption that emotional appeals may work best among the least informed and engaged citizen, but evidence suggests that the opposite is true. Huddy and Gunthorsdottir's (2000) original study tested issue activists belonging to related advocacy organizations in an experiment; they found that highly engaged activist generated the strongest

emotional response to issue-related persuasive appeals. The affect transfer thesis is a valuable foundation for this research project because the thesis provides for a theoretical connection between emotional responses and attribution of those feelings to political judgments.

The Special Case of Women and African-American Voters

This project has a particular interest in the voting behavior of the sub-groups of the American electorate. The focus is on whether and how political partisans (and partisan leaners) express their feelings toward a presidential candidate as well as how electoral subgroups such as women and African-American voters make political decisions.

This project examines the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections and the electoral behavior of subgroups of women and African American voters. The expectations about the political behavior of women and African-American voters are drawn from Dolan's (1997) affinity affect thesis, which states that women voters will be the most likely source of support for female candidates (Dolan 1997, 2005, 2008). While this thesis has commonly been applied to research about women's political behavior, given the context of the 2008 presidential election, the Affinity affect thesis may also be appropriately applied to examining the political behavior of African American voters. The unique political environment of the 2008 presidential election provides this research a unique opportunity to study the electoral influences of the affinity affect (both perceived and real) on the grounds of gender and race, which is a valuable application of this concept that has not been available prior to this project. While previous studies on the affinity affect (Thomas and Wilcox 2005) had studied voters' perceptions and reactions toward women candidates, this project offers a slightly revised incarnation.

With regard to women's political involvement, there are specific theories that underscore this project's expectations of women's political behavior. Women's political participation differs

from that of men. One explanation is that this may be a result of gendered separation between the public and private domains. Women were legally prohibited from participating in politics by any substantive means prior to the passage of the 19th amendment, and since women still struggle to fully achieve social and political parity. Generally, research on voting behavior does not include considerations of this legacy. Women's political participation appears different from that of men's because of gendered socialization. Socialization theories advanced by Chodorow (1978) and Ruddick (1996) suggest that women's social behavior is a product of gendered socialization, which shaped women's world-views and self-conceptualization, and in turn, were used to inform choices about ways to engage society and politics.

Another theory that shapes behavioral expectations for this research is the electoral gender gap. In politics, the gender gap has been interpreted several ways. At first, the gender gap referred to splits in party preference between men and women with women voting for Democratic candidates to a significantly greater extent than men (Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997; Norris 1997; Mueller and Mueller 1988). It has also referred women's political involvement as being outpaced by that of men's (Norranden 1999; Manza and Brooks 1998; Cover 1988; Wirls 1986). Recently, the gender gap as it has been traditionally understood, closed in the early 2000s (Bimber 2000). As recently as the 2008 presidential election women's political awareness and participation has steadily increased to the point that it outpaces men's political participation (Whitaker 2008; Thomas and Wilcox 2005). This trend is particularly important when studying its electoral effects in 2008. In 2004, however, absent a woman candidate for president, the gender gap may be noticeable in attitudes on political issues. There are theoretical reasons to expect that men and women's attitudes on campaign issues will be different. This

expectation relates to applications of the gender gap and the affinity affect. Are there issues on which women voters will be the only likely source of support?

The affinity affect thesis alone does not predict differences between women and men's political behavior. Party identification is another important variable to consider when studying women's voting behavior. Whitaker (2008) suggests that the intersection of gender and party identification produces gendered political attitudes on specific political issues (later becoming campaign issues). These expectations are already visible in the political landscape under the somewhat contrived labels referring to specific women's voting blocks such as "soccer moms" and "security moms."

With regard to the political involvement of African-Americans, there are some points of shared history with women. Both electoral sub-groups of people had been systemically denied access to the political system until the 20th century. Full access to participate in politics for African-Americans was not realized until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, voting trends among African-Americans have routinely favored the Democratic Party. African-Americans, as block of voters, are highly mobilized with consistent rates of turnout ranging between 60 and 80 percent. In terms of the American electorate overall, the African-American voting block is outpaced by white voters (Miller and Shanks 1996). The legacy of volatile race relations endures and one place it has manifested itself is in campaign politics. Before 2008, a common strategy was to campaign on social issues with thinly veiled racial overtones (Reeves 1997). These trends typically benefit the Democratic Party because African-American voters feel more favorable toward the party than most groups on civil rights issues and socially funded programs: research has demonstrated that African-American voters

express negative attitudes toward issues that are typically promoted by the Republican Party (Wallace et al. 2009).

Expectations of the African-American vote are guided by the steady voting trends of black voters supporting the Democratic agenda, in some cases, over the candidate (Wallace et al. 2009). In instances such as the 2004 election, for African-American voters, the Democratic Party label is more important to African Americans than the specific issues candidates express. While they may differ from Democrats on some issues, it is not enough to change their voting behavior (Sigelman, Sigelman and Walkosz 1995; Wallace et al. 2009).

The 2008 presidential campaign changed the electoral landscape. Before the candidacy of Barack Obama, the previous observations predicted voting behavior of the African American voting block. Now, with the first African-American presidential candidate, it is expected that the affinity affect would make an electoral difference among this important and highly mobilized group of voters. The affinity affect was originally applied to women's voting behavior, stating that women were most likely the largest support base for women candidates. Can the same prediction be made for African American candidates? Will African-American voters support Obama because of the affinity affect? Expectations are that yes, African-American voters will support Obama on the basis of both party identification and a bond forged through shared racial identities.

Conclusion

Politics as the marketplace of emotions is subject to re-interpretation in this project. There are new applications for the Affective Intelligence theory and the Affect Transfer thesis to political environments. This project's central research question concentrates on the characteristic of attribution of one's own feelings toward a presidential candidate onto a judgment made about

campaign issues associated with the candidate. In effect, a voter may transfer his or her feelings toward a candidate to judgments about that candidate's campaign. Based on the Transfer-of-Affect thesis, my expectation is that citizens who are highly involved in politics may express stronger emotional responses toward candidates than non-affiliated voters. The Transfer-of-affect thesis is particularly important to analyzing how voters may make attributions of their feelings toward a candidate to other information in the presidential campaign, then relying on their feelings toward a candidate to make judgments about campaign issues.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Since Marcus's (1988) original studies on voters' emotional responses to political candidates, more researchers have tried to examine emotion in political contexts to understand political behavior. Previous studies (see Marcus 1990; Ragsdale 1991 and Goren 1997) have explored the general relevance of emotions in politics. Other studies have examined the specific impact of emotions on information seeking (Marcus 1993; Bless 2000; Forgas 2000; Redlawsk et al. 2006 Valentino et al. 2008; Malhorta and Kuo 2009; Civettini 2009), candidate preferences (Goren 1997; Isbell and Ottati 2002; Finn and Glaser 2010) and vote choice (Ragsdale 1991; Marcus 1993; Ladd and Lenz 2008; Bader 2011).

The result is a respectable foundation of research that highlights a tradition of reliance on rational choice models to predict and explain political behavior. Collectively, research on emotion in politics introduced the utility of behavioral models to predict presidential approval and candidate preferences. Research focused on emotions in political contexts is becoming more common for its capacity to explain the role emotions play in political judgment and behavior. Previous studies have not displaced the utility of rational models using standard variables like party identification, but have added another dimension to consider when studying voting behavior and public opinion.

This project addresses an area that is overlooked in the literature. Breckler (1984) and Ostrom (1969) established that emotions are a core component of attitudes and Dewey (1894) and Zajonce (1980) claimed that emotions are integral to cognition. It is not altogether unexpected that emotions influence political preferences and attitude formation because

Granberg and Brown (1989) state that politics is innately an emotional setting. Snyder (2000) claimed that emotions help provide a sense of meaning in human life. In political contexts, voters rely on their feelings to attribute meaningful interpretations to issues, campaigns and candidates. Based on the Transfer-of-Affect thesis, it is anticipated that voters transfer their feelings about a candidate to their appraisals of campaign issues.

Finn and Glaser (2010) lend support to this assertion in their study about the influences of emotional responses to candidates on the presidential level. Marcus (2000; 2006) has implied that voters' emotional responses to political issues are important in formulating opinions about them. The findings are meaningful, but neglect to address the next question-how pre-election emotional responses to candidates mediate attitudes about campaign issues? Using behavior models employed by previous researchers such as Marcus et al. and Finn and Glaser, the impact of voters' feelings toward candidates on their attitudes about campaign issues are examined.

The Data

In this project, I utilized the American National Election Studies (ANES) pre-election surveys for both 2004 and 2008 presidential campaign. The ANES survey samples eligible U.S. voters prior to the 2004 and 2008 general election. The number of respondents in the 2004 pre-election survey was 1,211 and the number of respondents in the 2008 pre-election survey was 2,323. This project employed the pre-election survey in order to capture the influence of voters' feelings expressed toward a candidate as they formulated attitudes about specific campaign issues.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables reflect the salient issues of the 2004 and 2008 presidential campaign. For comparability, campaign issues were bundled into three general categories,

domestic issues, foreign affairs issues and morality topics. By bundling the dependent variables into three generalizable categories, it allows for comparative analysis between two different campaign contexts and political environments. The categories reflect similar issues for purpose of comparison; they were also issues germane to the context of the campaigns in 2004 and 2008 respectively. All dependent variables are coded dichotomously. Generally, attitudes of approval were coded 1 and disapproval was coded as 0.

Domestic Issues

Due to the concentrated international focus in the 2004 presidential campaign, there were only two domestic issues particularly germane in that campaign, the economy and domestic security. On the topic of the economy in 2004, the issue is measured by the question “Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy” Responses to the survey questions are coded 0 for disapproval and 1 for approval of Bush’s handling of the economy in 2004. With regard to issues on the domestic agenda, the question of domestic security is measured by the question “Has the current administration made the U. S. more or less secure?” Responses to the survey questions are coded 0 for less secure and 1 for more secure.

In 2008, domestic security was less relevant, but the economy was an even larger issue than four years earlier. The economy is a variable analyzed in both elections, but acquired particular importance in the autumn of 2008 when the financial crisis occurred. In 2004 and 2008, the variable measuring the economy is based on the same survey question, “do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy?” Responses were coded 0 for disapproval and 1 for approval. In addition to the economy, two other domestic issues were relevant in that campaign, which were not in 2004, the environment and health care. These additions reflect the campaign’s focus on the domestic agenda. The Democrats proposed

initiatives to address carbon emissions and a single-payer health care system (Abramson, Aldrich, Rhode 2010). Survey responses are coded 1 for approval (in support of the initiative) and 0 for disapproval.

Foreign Affairs

When comparing the two presidential campaigns in this project, the 2004 campaign was an election underscored by a particularly concentrated international focus. Questions tapping attitudes on foreign affairs were principally focused on America's engagement in foreign wars and the president's diplomatic relations with other countries. Most survey questions asked the respondents whether they approved or disapproved of a particular military or diplomatic action. Generally, all attitudes that expressed approval are coded as 1 and attitudes that expressed disapproval are coded 0.

In the 2004 campaign, most of the political emphasis was on the international agenda, the variables selected for analysis reflect the campaign's international focus. On the specific subject of foreign affairs, the variable is based on the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling our relations with foreign countries?" The war on terror was a particularly salient campaign issue and the variable is based on the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling to war on terrorism?" and the other variable was attitudes on the war in Afghanistan, with wording closely mirroring the phrasing for the Iraq question.

In 2008, the war in Iraq was still an active military issue for the presidential campaign. The variable tapping attitudes about the war in Iraq was the same in 2008 as it was four years earlier, it is based on the question, "Taking everything into account, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth the cost or not?" Respondents who answered they did think the war was worth

the cost are coded 1 and those who did not think it was worth the cost are coded 0. There are fewer variables dealing with foreign affairs analyzed in the 2008 presidential election because they were less salient in that political context than in 2004.

Morality

Social issues played different roles in the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections. In the 2004 campaign, social issues associated with morality were central to the campaign's rhetoric. During Bush's re-election campaign, the two social issues that were heavily emphasized to mobilize voters were same-sex marriage and abortion. Curiously, in 2008, the ANES pre-election survey omitted the question measuring attitudes on abortion. The 2004 variable is based on the question "Would you favor or oppose a law in your state that would allow the use of government funds to help pay for the costs of abortion for women who cannot afford them?" Responses that reported being in favor is coded as 1 and opposition is favored 0. The question, in effect, does not directly measure attitudes on the morality of abortion, but more likely taps the ideological view of government intervention of the states coupled with the morality of abortion. This variable can only be analyzed in the 2004 election since it was not included on the survey of the 2008 presidential election.

A single social issue on the topic of same-sex marriage is comparable between both elections. This variable analyzed in both the 2004 and 2008 campaigns is based on the survey question, "Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry, or do you think they should not be allowed to marry? Responses to the survey questions are coded 0 for disapproval of same-sex marriage and attitudes indicating approval are coded 1.

Independent Variables

The independent variables examined include the ANES indicators for emotional responses (hope, pride, anger, fear) party identification, ideology and the standard predictors for turnout (include age, gender, race, education and marital status).

Party identification is measured as a summary indicator, which allows me to control for Independent and weak partisan (leaners) identifiers. It is coded on a 7-point scale with 1 representing “strong Democrat” to 7 representing “strong Republican” and the middle scale represented the “Independent” identifiers. Ideology is coded similarly on the 7-point scale with 1 representing “extremely liberal” to 7 representing “extremely conservative.” The measurements for the ANES emotional responses are discussed with greater detail in the next section.

The controls for race differed between the 2004 and 2008 survey. In 2004, the variable controlling for racial identity categorized responses as White, Black, Asian, Native American or Hispanic. In the 2008 survey, racial identity categories were White, Black, White/Black and other race identities, Native American, and Latino. These classifications are numerically coded as categorical variables in order to isolate any electoral effects of racial identity.

The traditional demographic variables were included in all statistical models in addition to the controls for emotional impacts; some models demonstrated the considerable impact of these traditional indicators. Age was treated as a continuous variable on a scale from 1 to 99 years, as it is represented in the ANES survey. The measure for education was numerically coded as years of education attained. Gender and marital status are coded dichotomously. Men were coded 0 and women were coded as 1 and this corresponds with single versus married person (single=0 and married=1).

Emotional Response Indicators

Previous studies (See Marcus 1988; Marcus et. al 2006; Finn and Glaser 2010) explain that there are two predominant approaches guiding research on the structure of emotions. There is a two-dimensional valence measure of positive and negative emotion (Barrett and Russell 1999) or a three-dimensional scheme assessing positive emotion and two classifications of negative feelings (Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000; Steenbergen and Ellis 2006).

Marcus et al. (2000), aided by the affective intelligence model (AIM), determine that emotional responses toward candidates can sometimes take on a three-dimensional structure that encompasses the feelings of enthusiasm, anxiety and aversion. In the AIM, negative emotions are typically classified as anxiety (including feelings of fear, anxious, uneasy, or worried) and aversion (included anger, bitter, contemptuous, disgusted, hateful, loathing or resentment) (Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000; Marcus et al. 2006; Steenbergen and Ellis 2006). For this project, neither approach is particularly suitable to address the central research question because this study requires access to all four emotional response indicators provided in the ANES survey.

The four emotions tapped by the ANES survey offer suitable proxy measures consistent with the Affective Intelligence Model (AIM). The variables measuring emotion are provided by the ANES survey that taps attitudes asking about pride, hope, fear and anger. The ANES indicators for fear and anger offer a representative measure for anxiety (fear) and aversion (anger) and the indicators for hope and pride offer measures consistent with the previously mentioned theoretical approaches. These measures of emotion are based on the ANES candidate affect indicators, which ask respondents this question, “because of the kind of person he/she is or

because of something he/she has done, ever made you feel (angry/fearful /hopeful/proud)?” The effects of each emotion are analyzed individually.

Finn and Glaser (2010) analyzed each emotion separately, and it is necessary in this project to differentiate between the four types of emotions because each one may have a unique effect on making a political judgment. Research (Brehm 1999; Steenbergen and Ellis 2006) indicates that negative emotions are externally projected toward an object because negative feelings reinforce a desire to react against a negative stimulus or to punish those who could moderate or control the stimulus (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006). Additionally, fear and anger are distinct categories of emotions with distinct effects. The feeling of anger is an intense, highly potent and mobilizing emotion. As a mental motivational state, it activates a sense of urgency to reinstate emotional balance and stability (Brehm 1999; Marcus et al. 2002). Fear is an emotion that a person associates with discomfort, apprehension and powerlessness (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006). Fear is a mental state that stimulates heightened awareness of one’s environment and seeks information (akin to anxiety) in order to understand or analyze a potential threat (Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000).

Positive feelings may not evoke heightened states of emotional motivation like negative feelings because positive emotions serve to reinforce successful goal pursuits while negative emotions provide a stimulus for something wrong (Snyder 2000). The influence of positive emotions in political settings has received little attention in large part because the effects of negative emotions on political behavior are more readily observed than the effects of positive emotions. However, the 2008 presidential campaign made it salient to explore the effectiveness of invoking positive feelings of the voter in terms of motivating political action, awareness, and mobilization.

Insights gained from the fields of sociology and psychology indicates that positive feelings are associated with the unconscious expectations of normal social situations (Garfinkel 1963). Often times, distinctions are not made between the feelings of hope and pride. However, here, there is some evidence that offers the opportunity for distinction, because in political contexts, just like negative emotions, hope and pride may have unique effects on political behavior. Both the feelings of hope and pride involve a component of trust and in political settings it is a collectively shared expectation upon which social order is maintained (Barber 1983).

In political contexts, feelings of hope and pride are particularly important because they demonstrate similar influences on group behavior. Snyder (2000) notes that the feeling of hope correlates with goals and achievements on both the individual and collective levels. When accomplished, the feelings derived from achievement accentuate the sense of positive emotions and meaning in the lives of individuals and in the group. The sense of meaning derived is felt on a larger scale. The feeling of pride can denote a positive attitude toward both past and present activity. It can also convey satisfaction with the status quo (Meisenhelder 1982). According to Ben-ze've (2000), there are two major elements essential to feeling pride; evaluating something as positive and considering oneself as connected to that positive thing (Ben-ze've 2000). When political circumstances are stable, positive feelings function to reinforce the status quo and negative feelings activate a sense of danger and threat to expectations of normal social function and institutions causing individuals to defend against a threat to the status quo.

Logit and Linear Regression Analysis

To help convey the social and political significance the role emotions play in formulating political judgments, a series of logit models are used to relate a set of dichotomous dependent

variables to a set of independent variables. The dependent variables in this project display slight differentiation between the 2004 and 2008 presidential election, this accounts for the dynamic nature of electoral contexts and presidential campaigns.

A total of 16 logit models are tested in the analysis of the 2004 presidential election. There are eight independent variables tested for each presidential candidate respectively. In the analysis of the 2008 presidential election, there are eight independent variables tested for each presidential candidate (Obama and McCain respectively), which yield a total of 16 logit models testing emotions and campaign issues. Additional models were included to analyze the special case of women and African-American voters.

In addition, for the 2008 election, five regression models are analyzed in the special cases examining political behavior of women and African-American voters. This particular analysis tests the likeability of the 2008 presidential and vice presidential candidates based on the qualities of race and gender. In this case, regression analysis is used because the dependent variables are based on ANES feeling thermometers (a continuous variable). The ANES feeling thermometers are open-dimensional assessments of candidates. Each model is specified with the standard independent control variables that also include the predictors of race and gender. The independent variables are regressed against the ANES feeling thermometers (a continuous dependent variable) for the 2008 presidential candidates (McCain and Obama) and the 2008 vice presidential candidates (Biden and Palin), and for Hillary Clinton in the 2008 primaries. Consequently, voters liking a particular candidate in the 2008 campaign may be influenced by the intersection of race, gender, party identification and feelings toward a particular candidate. A particular model of interest is the regression model for Hillary Clinton, which was included to

examine whether any racial or gendered resentment resonated among Clinton supporters after she suspended her campaign after the 2008 primaries.

Assumptions and Expectations

Research on the potential electoral effects of emotions in political contexts is not a new endeavor. However, previous research has established the importance of this particular endeavor. To test new questions about the influence of voters' feelings on political behavior, previous findings affirm that emotions are important to cognitive processes that involve information seeking, revealing candidate preferences and motivating vote choices. These findings aid the formulation of the central research question; *do voters' feelings toward political candidates influence their support of campaign issues?*

Given what is understood about the emotional nature of politics, political appeals and their influences on voters, it is a reasonable expectation that this project will affirm that the voters feelings will mediate their attitudes on campaign issues. The expectation is that there will be evidence to support that voters rely on their feelings toward the presidential candidates when formulating their attitudes on campaign issues. Drawing from the affect transfer thesis, I anticipate this project will produce evidence of that process. Generally, I anticipate the analysis of the 2004 and 2008 presidential campaigns to demonstrate that voters transfer their emotional appraisals of presidential candidates onto their judgments of related campaign issues, in effect utilizing their feelings toward the candidates as a source of information by which to make a vote choice. Specifically, according to the Affect Transfer thesis, I anticipate that I will observe that strong partisan identifiers may rely more heavily on their feelings toward a presidential candidate when formulating their attitudes on campaign issues than weak partisan or independent identifies.

Finally, because racial and gendered identities were central components of the presidential campaign, I anticipate that the 2008 regression analysis will provide support for the affinity affect, those voters with specified racial and gender identities will demonstrate profound support for the 2008 candidates, especially defined along partisan affiliations. I expect evidence that confirms that affinity affect among Democratic women and African-American voters toward Barak Obama and Hillary Clinton. The results of the analysis on the impact of emotions in the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections are discussed in chapter four and five respectively.

Chapter 4: Analysis of the Influence of Voters' Feelings Toward Presidential Candidates on Attitudes about Campaign Issues in the 2004 Election

Feelings are important in the cognitive process and decision-making, and specifically related to the political environment, emotions matter when evaluating candidates and their issues. This chapter addresses this in the question *do voters' feelings about political candidates influence their support of campaign issues?* The analysis looks at this question by exploring whether voters' feelings about a particular candidate has an impact on his or her attitude on political issues.

Every political campaign is contextually unique and therefore certain circumstances may invoke different feelings about candidates and political issues altogether. This chapter analyzes the influence of four emotional dimensions in the setting of the 2004 presidential campaign. The results suggest that feelings voters had about George W. Bush or John F. Kerry were important to the evaluations made about campaign issues covering topics on domestic and international concerns. Attitudes on traditional values tended to be more ideological.

Two critical events shaped the political setting of the 2004 presidential election. First, the Electoral College controversy in 2000 lingered into George W. Bush's first term as his public approval ratings at the start was near 50 percent, some of the lowest approval ratings for a new presidential term.² Second, the attacks of September 11, 2001, defined Bush's presidency and the campaign of 2004. The days following the attacks, Bush's public approval surged to

² Roper and Pew Research public opinion poll ratings taken from January 2001-April 2001.

unprecedented range of 90 percent.³ In the view of many Bush supporters, his legitimacy both as president and the commander-in-chief was secured after the 9/11 attacks (Crotty 2005).

Political Overview of the 2004 Campaign:

George W. Bush needed to evaluate the condition of the status quo because the election would be an important referendum on his first term (Crotty 2005; Mellow 2005; Nelson 2005). According to Craig Allen Smith (2005), when a candidate for office must answer two critical and strategic questions. For incumbents, two important issues needed consideration. First, in 2004, there was one major issue that framed the campaign—the war on terror. Bush’s campaign framed the election as a wartime circumstance and to change presidents in the middle of two simultaneous wars was too perilous (Smith 2005). Second, according to Smith’s framework, political challengers need to consider several issues regarding the ways in which a Presidential incumbent can be defeated (Smith, 136). The styles of political challengers seem less straightforward because they first need to win their party’s nomination (where as the incumbent presumably already has the party’s support).

In 2004, John Kerry needed to identify a strategy that would increase the likelihood of securing the Democrat’s nomination. By March of 2004, Kerry had won enough delegates to claim presumptive nomination status (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007). Kerry then needed to decide whether he was involved in a team effort to defeat Bush, meaning it was more important for the Democrats to win the White House rather than who won the party’s nomination or a partisan free-for-all to win the nomination (Smith 2005). The more altruistic approach was adopted by the Democrats during the primary season because it was clear that partisans disliked Bush so much that Democrats would vote for “anybody but Bush” (Conley 2005).

³ Roper and Pew public opinion polls from 10.2001.

Drawing insights from Smith's perspective, the issues that set the agenda for the 2004 presidential campaign emphasized the war on terror and domestic safety, which the Republican Party merged with traditional social values. Bush successfully consolidated the party base on traditional values and the war on terror (Mellow 2005; Fiorina 2006; Sabato 2006; Jacobson 2007). The Republican issue ownership of security and traditional values minimized competing influences on independent voters from the Democrats on issues such as the economy, health care, and education (Mellow 2005; Abramowitz and Stone 2006), which had the potential to divide.

A key political theme that Bush and Cheney exploited in the 2004 campaign was the war on terror. Following the 9/11 attacks, Bush was immediately transformed from a politically illegitimate and fledgling president to a wartime, terrorism-fighting president (Crotty 2005). As Americans rallied, the Republicans were successful in harnessing that patriotic energy and Bush's public approval surged, which ultimately sustained the 2004 presidential campaign. The Republican Party framed Bush as the national security expert with decisive leadership for wartime, and as the only person Americans could trust to be tough on terrorism (Crotty 2005; Sandler 2006; Claibourn 2011).

According to Mellow (2005), the foundation of Republican success in 2004 was the party's skill in exploiting the lasting rally effect (Mueller 1973; Hetherington and Nelson 2003). Republican rhetoric focused on the concerns of safety and continuity, based on the adage that "one doesn't change horses" in the middle of a war. The rhetoric of distress and uses of graphic 9/11 images resonated with partisans and independents alike by heightening their perceived sense of danger and powerlessness (Smith 2005; Hetherington and Nelson 2003). With this campaign strategy, the Republicans assured voters that the war was a winnable commitment and was the only rational approach to preserving the American lifestyle (Norpoth and Sidman 2007;

Jacobson 2009). All other campaign issues, particularly, domestic security, the economy, and social issues were linked to the war on terror filtered through feelings of patriotism and morality (Norpoth and Sidman 2007; Abramowitz and Stone 2006).

At the time, the perceived benefits derived from the Republican strategy of linking the war on terror to morality were palpable and eventually resulted in the re-election of George W. Bush. The Republicans were successful at intertwining national security with morality, which appealed to the conservative base (Jacobson 2004, 2009). According to Jacobson (2007), defining the issues narrowly made the debate and related public discourse easier to control and manipulate, which assisted efforts to mobilize specific target groups in the electorate. In 2004, the Republican focus was on solidifying and mobilizing the conservative, religious base with appeals to morality and reconstructing the ideal of ‘moral’ war (Jacobson 2007).

When associating morality with this agenda, Langer and Cohen (2005) claim that, for voters, the traditional values and moral emphasis “served as ill-defined grab bag, especially for Bush voters, who, compared with John Kerry’s voters, had fewer appealing options.” (Langer and Cohen, 714). The deliberately vague morality agenda benefitted the Republican campaign because it enabled the party to establish ownership of certain social issues and to control the tone of the campaign, putting the Democrats on a defensive strategy.

The Democrats attempted to cast a wide net to include issues that would expand the scope of debate, mobilize its base, and convert independent voters from the narrowly defined Republican agenda (Conley 2005). The Democrats tried to exploit the potentially divisive domestic issue such as endangered civil liberties, budget deficits (compared to the Clinton balanced budget policies), health care, tax reform and social security benefits and other areas of traditional Democratic strength (Crotty 2005).

The Democrats articulated two campaign goals. First, to emphasize the domestic agenda and put the economy back on the voters' radar and second, to persuade the voting public that John Kerry would be a better choice to command the Iraq war (Conley 2005; Quirk and Matheson 2005; Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007). Regarding domestic issues, Democrats relied on its traditional rallying points to mobilize the base. The Kerry campaign reflected public sentiment on major domestic issues including, education, abortion, same-sex marriage, health care and social security (Conley 2005). However, Democrats could not overlook that the campaign was going to be determined by the Bush agenda featuring foreign policy and the war on terror (Pomper 2005).

The Democrats understood that reframing the political debate would be difficult. Instead, Kerry's organization attempted draw distinctions between Kerry and Bush by focusing on personal credentials. Kerry's military service was an attractive option since he was a decorated Vietnam veteran and Bush's service in the National Guard altogether questionable. Democrats used the popular parody of Bush's middle initial ("The W. stands for wrong") and then the slogan that indicted Bush's 'go-it-alone' mentality, "make American stronger at home and respected by the world" (Conley 2005).

As much as the Democrats emphasized the domestic agenda, they understood that the campaign was going to be determined by foreign affairs because the war in Iraq dominated both party's agendas. The Democrats supported the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, but presented Kerry as the better choice for commander-in-chief and chief diplomat (Crotty 2005; Pomper 2005). A primary consideration for the Democrats was that Bush's position on foreign policy had alienated many strategic allies with its unilateral action in the military campaigns in Afghanistan and, especially, in Iraq. Furthermore, the test presented to Kerry's campaign was the hurdle of

campaigning against a popular incumbent wartime president with an approval rating hovering around 62 percent.⁴

With this in mind, the Democrat strategy emphasized the growing unpopularity of the Iraq war. With polls indicating support for the war in Iraq weakening, the Democrats wanted to showcase the human and economic toll of war (Abramowitz and Stone 2006) with events and evidence that spurred public backlash, such as the public news that a privately contracted military employee, Tami Scilio, was fired after publishing a photo of flag-draped caskets in a cargo plane headed back to the United States. Also, a public controversy regarding the Bush administration concerning that the war was waged on false evidence that Saddam Hussein manufactured and harbored weapons of mass destruction and disseminated chemical weapons (Conley 2005; Pomper 2005)

Kerry's campaign strategy to showcase the human toll of war and the mounting public backlash was countered by a 527 group that called itself the Swift Boat Veterans against Kerry. The group ran several ads attacking the validity of Kerry's Vietnam (Freedman 2006; Jacobson 2007). The attack ads were irreversibly damaging to Kerry's credibility as a potential replacement for the commander-in-chief. In the end, the presidential election was decided by the answers to two questions, "How has President Bush done" and "and how likely is it that Kerry will do better" (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007).

Summary of Analysis: The Impact of Emotions in the 2004 Election

Returning to the question being explored in this chapter: *do voters' feelings about political candidates influence their evaluation of campaign issues?* Analysis was conducted using survey data from the 2004 American National Election Studies (ANES) time series pre-election sample.

⁴ www.gallup.com

The dependent variables are issues that represented the political issues of each party's agenda. For comparability, there are three categories of issues; domestic issues, foreign affairs and morality politics. The first set of control variables is the ANES measure for emotion: pride, hope, fear and anger. The second set of control variables consist of political determinants such as party identification and ideology. The final set of independent variables is the controls for demographic information.

The dependent variables for domestic topics were 1) the economy and 2) domestic security. With regard to foreign affairs, four issues were chosen. Two issues were selected to get at general attitudes of foreign affairs: 1) evaluation of foreign relations and 2) the war on terror. Then, more specifically, two variables on the war in Iraq and Afghanistan were selected to measure attitudes on specific military actions. Finally, on the topic of morality two issues were examined, same-sex marriage and government-funded abortion.

The Impact of Voters' feelings Toward George W. Bush and John F. Kerry

Presidential leadership theories and personality studies (Deluga 1997; Bartels 2002; Winter 2002) conclude that candidates' personalities largely influence political contexts, campaigns, voters' feelings about them, and political issues. According to Deluga (1997) and Bartels (2002), personality traits are particularly provocative in political settings because they elicit emotional reactions in the voters. This is particularly true for the presidential campaign in 2004. Jacobson (2007) suggests that Bush's personality and character traits were politically divisive and polarized the electorate. Abramowitz and Stone (2006) report that Bush was one of the most divisive candidates since 1968. During his first term, Bush was a highly polarizing personality and became increasingly more divisive during the re-election campaign. This point is supported by the conclusions in this chapter, which demonstrate that voters' attitudes about

political issues followed the issue-based divisions observed by Jacobson (2007). Moreover, the findings here support the conclusion that Bush was an emotionally divisive political figure.

For the present purposes, the next three sections focus on the results of the impact of voters' feelings toward George W. Bush and John Kerry. The analysis of the influence of other variable subsets will be addressed in the general discussion of findings.

Domestic Issues

The influence of voters' emotions on two domestic issues in the 2004 presidential campaign is examined in this section. Respondents' feelings toward Bush and Kerry during the 2004 presidential campaign were regressed against attitudes on economic policy and domestic security. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 display the results for the influence of feelings on attitudes about economic policy.

Table 4.1: Influence of feelings toward to George W. Bush and Attitudes on Economic Policy in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -1.80 | 0.00* |
| Fear | | -1.38 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.31 | 0.36 |
| Pride | | 1.51 | 0.00* |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.80 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.12 | 0.35 |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.01 | 0.07** |
| Gender | | 0.41 | 0.18 |
| Race | | -0.08 | 0.41 |
| Education | | -0.02 | 0.67 |
| Marital Status | | -0.18 | 0.06** |
| Constant | -1.39 | | |
| Number of Cases | 606 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 546.47 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.65 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -145.96 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Table 4.1 display results of the influence of feelings toward Bush on attitudes about the economy. The results indicate that both positive and negative feelings have important influence on the attitudes expressed about the economy in 2004. The positive emotion of pride is statistically significant. Respondents, who remarked that Bush made him or her feel proud, approved of Bush's economic policy. Conversely, feelings of hope were not influential on approval of economic policy. It is likely that pride, instead of hope, was statistically significant in judgments of economic policy because the survey question asked voters to make a retrospective judgment about Bush's first term action on economic policy. Since respondents

were evaluating the historical performance of the president, the feeling of pride is consistent with retrospective evaluation.

During a re-election campaign, retrospective judgments are common because re-election campaigns are typically a referendum on the incumbent. In this instance, respondents who were asked survey questions about Bush were naturally engaging in retrospective evaluations (thinking about his first term performance), whereas respondents who were asked questions to evaluate Kerry engaged prospective analysis about the future performance of John Kerry as president.

To elaborate on this point, table 4.2 displays the results of the influence of emotions on the attitudes toward Kerry. In this model, the feeling of hope is statistically significant. Respondents, who reported that Kerry made him or her feel hope, reported that they did not approve of how Bush handled the economy in his first term. Voters engaged a prospective appraisal about whether “Kerry will do a better job than Bush.” Voters who expressed a positive predisposition toward Kerry answered they were hopeful about what Kerry would do as president. Regarding the issue of economic policy, the feeling of pride is associated with retrospective assessments of Bush and the feeling of hope correlates with prospective judgments toward Kerry.

Negative feelings also influenced attitudes about economic policy in 2004. In Table 4.1, both the dimensions of negative emotions are statistically significant. Respondents who reported that Bush made him or her feel angry or fearful expressed negative attitudes toward Bush’s economic policies. While anger and fear are both negative emotions, they yield different consequences. Since negative emotions capture reactions to an undesirable stimulus, these findings help isolate the particular issues that elicited adverse reactions from voters. In Table 4.1

voters, who expressed the negative feelings of anger or fear toward Bush, reported disapproval of Bush's handling of the economy.

Table 4.2: Feelings Toward John Kerry and Attitudes on Economic Policy in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.65 | 0.07** |
| Fear | 0.38 | 0.32 |
| Hope | -1.75 | 0.00* |
| Pride | -0.35 | 0.33 |
| Political and Social Factors | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.82 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.12 | 0.30 |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.00 | 0.75 |
| Gender | 0.42 | 0.14 |
| Race | -0.01 | 0.87 |
| Education | -0.07 | 0.24 |
| Marital Status | -0.27 | 0.00* |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

In Table 4.2, anger is the only statistically significant negative emotion. This is compelling evidence since anger is typically classified as a reactionary feeling. Reactionary emotions are more commonly associated with judgments about incumbents. Here, the significance of anger indicated a more direct response toward Kerry than a political assessment of economic policy. These results point to innate weaknesses, that as a candidate, Kerry displayed. Kerry had problems with establishing the necessary earnest and personal connections with voters. He did not openly exhibit emotions at public appearances. Where Bush flaunted

emotion and conveyed sincerity through the disclosure of his personal faith and many public appearances with his family (Pomper 2007). These results suggest that a candidate's display of emotion is important and on the subject of the economy, respondents who were angered by Kerry's candidacy reported approval for Bush's economic policy.

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 display the results of the influence of emotions on attitudes about domestic security. The dependent variable is based on the question about whether or not respondents felt secure in 2004. Imbedded in that survey question was a subtext about two of the major issues on the security agenda: the September 11 attacks and the war on terror.

Table 4.3 displays the impact of feelings expressed toward George W. Bush on opinions about domestic security. In this model, all four emotions are statistically significant, which suggests that this issue was both ideologically and emotionally divisive. Respondents who reported feelings of hope and pride toward Bush also believed they were more secure in 2004 than in years previous. Conversely, the feelings of anger and fear were particularly important in revealing the divisive nature of this topic. Respondents who reported that Bush made them feel anger or fear, reacted negatively to the question regarding their personal feelings of safety.

Table 4.3: The Influence of Feelings Toward George W. Bush on Attitudes about Domestic Safety and Defense in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -1.79 | 0.00* |
| Fear | | -1.85 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.75 | 0.05* |
| Pride | | 1.56 | 0.00* |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.31 | 0.01* |
| Ideology | | 0.28 | 0.04* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.01 | 0.37 |
| Gender | | -0.02 | 0.93 |
| Race | | 0.02 | 0.85 |
| Education | | 0.01 | 0.76 |
| Marital Status | | -0.05 | 0.58 |
| Constant | 0.04 | | |
| Number of Cases | 485 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 374.73 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.60 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -121.57 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Would you say that, compared to 2000, the Bush administration has made the United States more secure from its foreign enemies, or less secure? 0=less secure, 1=more secure

Table 4.4: The Influence of Feelings Toward John Kerry on Attitudes about Domestic Safety and Defense in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.09 | 0.79 |
| Fear | | 0.47 | 0.28 |
| Hope | | -1.08 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | -0.46 | 0.17 |
| Political and Social Factors | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.59 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.34 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.00 | 0.39 |
| Gender | | 0.23 | 0.42 |
| Race | | 0.09 | 0.35 |
| Education | | -0.00 | 0.99 |
| Marital Status | | -0.14 | 0.13 |
| Constant | -2.75 | | |
| Number of Cases | 479 | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 298.66 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.488 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -156.47 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Would you say that, compared to 2000, the Bush administration has made the United States more secure from its foreign enemies, or less secure? 0=less secure, 1=more secure

Table 4.4 displays the results of feelings toward Kerry and attitudes about domestic security. Hope is the only statistically significant emotion. Respondents that reported John Kerry made them feel hope were likely to report that they felt less secure in 2004. The results of this model lend support to the hypothesis that the feeling of hope is associated with prospective political judgments of John Kerry. Voters that were displeased with Bush expressed hope that Kerry would do a better job of managing domestic security.

Foreign Affairs

This section reviews the analysis on the influence of emotions on attitudes about foreign affairs featuring topics on the condition of foreign relations, the war on terror, the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq. A key point of political tension between the Democrats and Republicans in 2004 was perceptions of the U.S.'s unilateral military action in Iraq and Afghanistan (Abramowitz and Stone 2006). This contention was the source of one of Kerry's campaign slogans "Make America Stronger at home and respected in the world." This slogan addressed the growing concerns about how the U.S. was perceived by its allies.

The topic of foreign relations is examined here. The dependent variable is based on the ANES question about whether or not respondents approved of Bush's handling of foreign relations during his first term as president. Table 4.5 displays the results for George W. Bush. In this model, three emotions are statistically significant: pride, fear and anger. When studying the influence of feelings toward Bush, the results are consistent with those displayed for domestic issues. Regarding positive feelings, the emotion pride is associated with retrospective judgments of Bush. On this particular issue, respondents who reported feeling proud about Bush remarked that they approved of how he handled foreign policy in his first term as President.

Both the feelings of anger and fear influenced political assessments of Bush's foreign policy. These results suggest that voters reflected the divisiveness of the two parties on the topic of foreign relations. Respondents who reported that Bush made them feel anger or fear did not approve of his foreign policy. In this instance, angry voters conveyed their own emotional assessments of Bush's political position on foreign relations. It is likely that angry judgments captured voters' negative assessments of several policies that enveloped Bush's "go-it-alone" mentality, coupled with his disregard of political counsel from crucial allies (Crotty 2005).

Anger explained voter response to Bush on the question of foreign relations. Voters interpreted Bush's policies as the cause of the demise of America's respect in the global community and, in turn, expressed their wish for punitive action (e.g. voting him out) (Denton 2005: Drew and Weaver 2006).

Table 4.5: Feelings Toward George W. Bush and Attitudes on Foreign Relations in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | -1.80 | 0.00* |
| Fear | -1.38 | 0.00* |
| Hope | 0.31 | 0.36 |
| Pride | 1.51 | 0.00* |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.80 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.12 | 0.35 |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.01 | 0.07** |
| Gender | 0.41 | 0.18 |
| Race | -0.08 | 0.41 |
| Education | -0.02 | 0.67 |
| Marital Status | -0.18 | 0.06* |
| Constant | -1.39 | |
| Number of Cases | 606 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 546.47 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.65 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -145.96 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve of disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling our relations with foreign countries?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

In contrast, fear renders a different narrative than anger. Voters react differently when they express feelings of fear than anger. Fear is an emotion that is associated with discomfort, apprehension and often powerlessness (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006). Like anger, it is a reactionary emotion to a negative stimulus, but it does not elicit the punitive attitude from voters. In this model, voters conveyed their apprehension and insecurity toward the future of

America's political position in foreign relations (Jacobson 2005; Abramson, Aldrich and Rickershauser 2007).

Table 4.6: Feelings Toward John Kerry on Attitudes about Foreign Relations in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.65 | 0.07** |
| Fear | 0.38 | 0.32 |
| Hope | -1.75 | 0.00* |
| Pride | -0.35 | 0.33 |
| Political and Social Factors | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.82 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.12 | 0.30 |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.00 | 0.75 |
| Gender | 0.42 | 0.14 |
| Race | -0.01 | 0.87 |
| Education | -0.07 | 0.24 |
| Marital Status | -0.27 | 0.00* |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve of disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling our relations with foreign countries?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Table 4.6 displays the findings of the influence of the feelings toward Kerry on the question about foreign relations. As the challenger, Kerry invoked the feelings associated with prospective judgments, hope and anger. The emotion of hope is consistent with the thesis that voters were prospectively evaluating Kerry as the president. Consequently, respondents who were dissatisfied with Bush's performance in his first term expressed hope at the prospect of Kerry as president and hope to improve U. S. relations with its international partners. Voters who expressed the feeling of anger toward Kerry conveyed that his candidacy represented a

threat to which voters reacted punitively. The Bush campaign exploited this by staging a range of political attacks aimed to discredit Kerry as a viable commander-in-chief that served to be highly divisive among Vietnam War veterans (Abramowitz and Stone 2006)

The war on terror was a cornerstone issue in the 2004 campaign. Tables 4.7 and 4.8 display the findings for the influence of emotions toward the candidates on attitudes about the war on terror. The analysis of Bush suggests a correlation between voters' attitudes about domestic security and support for the war on terror. In Table 4.7, similar to the findings for attitudes on domestic security, all four emotions are statistically significant.

Table 4.7: The Influence of Feelings Toward George W. Bush on Attitudes about the War on Terror in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -1.51 | 0.00* |
| Fear | | -1.22 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.61 | 0.05* |
| Pride | | 1.50 | 0.00* |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.47 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.13 | 0.29 |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.01 | 0.41 |
| Gender | | -0.66 | 0.02* |
| Race | | 0.11 | 0.22 |
| Education | | 0.04 | 0.46 |
| Marital Status | | -0.10 | 0.24 |
| Constant | -2.14 | | |
| Number of Cases | 608 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 480.47 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.57 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -177.16 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the war on terrorism?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

The emotions of hope and pride are influential, but offer different interpretations of voter reactions. The function of pride in this model is consistent with previous observations, that respondents positively evaluated Bush's political position on the war on terror. The emotion of hope offers another interpretation. Respondents that reported Bush made him or her feel hope conveyed two observations. First, the war on terror was a long-term commitment (connected to other issues such as security and safety) and second, Bush was the preferred choice as leader in the war on terror. Since both hope and pride are statistically significant, they are important influences on the attitudes about the war on terror. By articulating their feelings of hope and pride toward Bush, voters conveyed their trust in his anti-terrorism policies. According to Bernard (1983), hope and pride are emotions that, together, produce the judgment of trust, "trust involves expectation that the social order will continue to exist, that the people who claim expertise will perform competently (Bernard, 175). In this instance, voters' feelings of pride and hope toward Bush delivered the message of political trust to continue America's involvement in the war on terror.

Negative emotions influenced attitudes about the war on terror as much as positive emotions. Respondents who reported that Bush made them feel anger or fear did not articulate support for his efforts on the war on terror. The reasons for voters' negative reactions toward Bush were consistent with the function of negative emotions. The voter, who felt negatively toward Bush, also reported that he or she did not trust him, or his policies regarding the war on terror.

Table 4.8: The Influence of Feelings Toward John Kerry on Attitudes about the War on Terror in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.34 | 0.27 |
| Fear | 0.35 | 0.30 |
| Hope | -1.21 | 0.00* |
| Pride | -0.20 | 0.52 |
| Political and Social Factors | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.62 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.19 | 0.07** |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.11 |
| Gender | -0.38 | 0.12 |
| Race | 0.10 | 0.20 |
| Education | 0.00 | 0.89 |
| Marital Status | -0.20 | 0.00* |
| Constant | -2.26 | |
| Number of Cases | 598 | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 492.38 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.59 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -167.56 | ***** |

*P<.05, **P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the war on terrorism?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

For John Kerry, Table 4.8 displays results that are both expected and consistent with previous models. Kerry's challenger status in 2004 produced a consistent political narrative. Political challengers routinely invoke feelings of hope among voters dissatisfied with the status quo. The respondents who reported negative feelings toward Bush were likely to be the voters who felt hope toward John Kerry on this issue regarding the war on terror. This issue was divisive because the long-term political implications for U.S. foreign policy (Abramson, Aldrich and Rickershauser 2007).

The next models are displayed in the Tables 4.9 and 4.10 and report the findings for the influence of emotions on the attitudes about the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The political justification for both war fronts were grounded in the same theme of safety and security. While

the same rhetoric was used to justify the commitment to each war, voters' judgment differed widely.

Table 4.9: Feelings Toward George W. Bush and Attitudes about the War in Afghanistan in 2004

| Independent Variable | | B | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.70 | 0.03* |
| Fear | | -0.56 | 0.04* |
| Hope | | 0.14 | 0.63 |
| Pride | | 0.37 | 0.19 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.31 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | -0.14 | 0.14 |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.01 | 0.32 |
| Gender | | -1.12 | 0.00* |
| Race | | 0.20 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.01 | 0.77 |
| Marital Status | | -0.11 | 0.09** |
| Constant | 0.93 | | |
| Number of Cases | 606 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 154.87 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.23 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -251.31 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the U.S. war against the Taliban government in Afghanistan was worth the cost or not?" 0=not worth it, 1=worth it

Table 4.9 displays the results of the impact that feelings expressed toward Bush had on the war in Afghanistan. The negative feelings of anger and fear are statistically significant. Both have important implications for voters' attitudes about the war in Afghanistan. The dependent variable is based on the question that asked respondents to consider whether or not the war in Afghanistan was worth the cost. However, the interpretation of 'cost' in the ANES the survey is ambiguous, so it is difficult to ascertain how voters conceptualized the *idea* of 'cost'. In the context of war, it is inferred to mean the human toll (Norpoth and Sidman 2007). Ultimately, it is

difficult to know whether respondents' interpreted 'cost' to mean the human toll or the tax burden (or both).

Regarding the analysis of emotions, only the feelings of fear and anger are statistically significant. The Bush administration proposed a connection between al Qaeda and the September 11 attacks to justify the military action in Afghanistan. The American public was convinced that Osama bin Laden orchestrated the attacks on American and, was harbored by the Taliban in Afghanistan (Rogers 2004; Kuyper 2006; Boydstun 2008; Boydstun and Glazier 2008). Ultimately, voters' attitudes about the war in Afghanistan were displaced by military action in Iraq. Without the capture of Bin Laden, American voters expressed fatigued with the news on Afghanistan. For many voters, political fatigue translated into dissatisfaction with the Bush administration on the subject of Afghanistan.

Regarding the analysis of the influence of feelings toward John Kerry, Table 4.10 exhibits that two feelings are particularly important in this model. The feelings of hope and fear expressed toward Kerry influenced attitudes about the war in Afghanistan. Both emotions are associated with prospective judgments. Looking at each emotional response independently, it reveals a different narrative for voter response. As previously noted, the feeling of hope is associated with prospective evaluations. The respondents who reported that Kerry made them feel hope, also believed that going to war in Afghanistan was not worth the financial or human cost.

Table 4.10: Feelings Toward John Kerry and Attitudes about the War in Afghanistan in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.12 | 0.67 |
| Fear | | 0.82 | 0.03* |
| Hope | | -0.54 | 0.08** |
| Pride | | 0.02 | 0.93 |
| Political and Social Factors | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.36 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | -0.12 | 0.20 |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.00 | 0.31 |
| Gender | | -1.09 | 0.00* |
| Race | | 0.21 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.00 | 0.94 |
| Marital Status | | -0.15 | 0.02* |
| Constant | 0.27 | | |
| Number of Cases | 598 | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 145.04 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.22 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -254.09 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, **P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the U.S. war against the Taliban government in Afghanistan was worth the cost or not?"
0=not worth it, 1=worth it

While the feeling of fear is associated with prospective judgments, it offers a different interpretation of voters' reactions to Kerry. Table 4.10 shows that respondents, who reported that Kerry made them feel fear, also expressed support for the war in Afghanistan. It is likely that those who felt fearful about the prospects of John Kerry as commander-in-chief, also felt insecure about a change in leadership during wartime. This suggests that fearful voters were receptive to the Bush campaign message to "not change horses in the middle of war" (Weisberg and Christenson 2007).

Unlike the feelings expressed about the Afghanistan conflict, the feelings about the Iraq war were highly divisive. The results displayed in Tables 4.11 and 4.12 suggest that emotional responses to the candidates were important to opinions about Iraq because for both candidates, all four emotions are statistically significant.

There were two critical pieces of evidence that the Bush administration offered the American public to justify military involvement in Iraq. First, that Saddam Hussein manufactured and proliferated weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which posed a threat to the immediate region (e.g. Israel) and directly to the United States (Boydston and Glazier 2008). Second, then Attorney General Colin Powell's testimony before the United Nations rallied short-lived international support based on erroneous claims that Iraq was capable of producing, disseminating and launching bio-chemical weapons (Kuyper 2006; Boydston 2008).

This evidence presented by the White House fostered a restless political environment, which elicited feelings of fear and foreboding about one's own safety in America. As a result, many voters approved of the decision to go to war in Iraq because they expressed trust in the Bush doctrine (Abramson, Aldrich and Rickershauser 2007). In this instance, voters' feelings of fear translated into positive support for the war. Many of those positive feelings for Bush lingered because in Table 4.11, both feelings of pride and hope were influential on the attitudes about the war in Iraq. Respondents, who reported that Bush made them feel proud or hope, also reported that they thought the war in Iraq was worth the cost. As was the case with previous analysis, the function of the emotions of hope and pride in the cognitive process suggests that the expressions of hope and pride conveyed the message of political trust regarding Bush's mandate on the war in Iraq (see also Tables 4.3 and 4.7).

Table 4.11: The Influence of Feelings Toward George W. Bush on Attitudes about the War in Iraq in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | -1.18 | 0.00* |
| Fear | -1.19 | 0.00* |
| Hope | 0.54 | 0.08** |
| Pride | 1.43 | 0.00* |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.44 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.15 | 0.16 |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.02 | 0.03* |
| Gender | 0.24 | 0.33 |
| Race | -0.10 | 0.31 |
| Education | -0.04 | 0.42 |
| Marital Status | -0.01 | 0.92 |
| Constant | -2.08 | |
| Number of Cases | 609 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 406.20 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.49 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -210.61 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth the cost or not?" 0= not worth the cost, 1= worth the cost

While positive emotions toward Bush sustained the 2004 presidential campaign, negative public sentiment against the war emerged. The feelings of fear and anger reported in response to the question about Iraq, suggested that voters reacted to the revelation of false evidence that was offered as justification to go war. Voters who expressed feelings of anger or fear toward Bush did not think the Iraq war was worth the financial or human cost. These sentiments suggest that voters were apprehensive about Bush continuing as the commander-in-chief. They felt less secure and did not trust his leadership after it became public that Iraq did not have weapons of mass destruction (Jacobson 2007; Weisburg and Christenson 2007; Boydston 2008).

Table 4.12: The Influence of Feelings Toward John Kerry on Attitudes about the War in Iraq in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.55 | 0.03* |
| Fear | | 0.52 | 0.06** |
| Hope | | -0.74 | 0.01* |
| Pride | | -0.52 | 0.09** |
| Political and Social Factors | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.57 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.17 | 0.09** |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.01 | 0.16 |
| Gender | | 0.25 | 0.27 |
| Race | | -0.02 | 0.75 |
| Education | | -0.05 | 0.25 |
| Marital Status | | -0.11 | 0.12 |
| Constant | -2.65 | | |
| Number of Cases | 601 | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 338.03 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.41 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -238.69 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, **P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth the cost or not?" 0= not worth the cost, 1= worth the cost

Table 4.12 exhibits the results of the influence of the feelings toward Kerry on attitudes about the war in Iraq. Respondents were as emotionally expressive toward Kerry on the topic of Iraq as they were toward Bush. The findings displayed in both tables emphasize the topics divisiveness. The respondents who reported that Kerry made him or her feel hopeful or proud did not support the Iraq war. Conversely, respondents who remarked that Kerry made them feel anger or fear supported military action in Iraq. These responses resulted from the purported success of the 527 Swift Boat Veterans attack ads. It is reasonable to note that voters, who felt angry at Kerry or felt fear toward him, were reacting to the campaign ads that attacked Kerry's Vietnam record and otherwise criticized Kerry's post tour of duty outspoken anti-war behavior. Those messages angered many Vietnam veterans along with several supporters of the Iraq war.

Morality Politics

In the final category of issue analysis, the topic of morality politics is examined. The two issues examined were same-sex marriage and federal funding for abortion. The assumptions that led to the selection of these issues involved the expectation that these issues were innately emotive. Among all three categories of issues examined in this chapter, the expectations of this section demonstrating the most expression of feelings were not realized.

Contrary to expectations, among all the political issues examined in this project, these were the least emotional. The findings here do not overtly suggest that these issues were unimportant in the 2004 election. The findings support previous observations about the role traditional values played in 2004, “for Americans in 2004, morality meant much more than opposition to same-sex marriage or abortion” (Pomper, 59). Moral issues in 2004 held broader meanings for voters. Campaign scholars (Crotty 2005; Pomper 2005; Jacobson 2007; Campbell 2007) agree that in states where the election was close, morality issues gave the advantage to Bush. Morality took on a broader meaning because it was also largely attached to the war on terror. Bush would have fallen short without the gains he derived from other issues, particularly terrorism (Pomper 2005; Campbell and Monson 2007). The issues that aimed to invoke feelings attached to traditional values affected the election only through mobilization. Having these issues on the agenda mobilized the Republican base as a strategy and not as a new attitude on the topic.

Table 4.13: Feelings Toward George W. Bush and Attitudes about Same-Sex Marriage in 2004

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.37 | 0.16 |
| Fear | | 0.42 | 0.10 |
| Hope | | -0.09 | 0.74 |
| Pride | | -0.23 | 0.42 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | -0.10 | 0.21 |
| Ideology | | -0.73 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.02 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | -0.01 | 0.94 |
| Race | | 0.34 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.03 | 0.44 |
| Marital Status | | 0.14 | 0.03* |
| Constant | 2.06 | | |
| Number of Cases | 558 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 245.01 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.32 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -261.03 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry, or do you think they should not be allowed to marry? 0=should not be allowed, 1=should be allowed

**Table 4.14: Feelings Toward John Kerry and Attitudes on
Same-Sex Marriage in 2004**

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.00 | 0.97 |
| Fear | | -0.36 | 0.21 |
| Hope | | 0.22 | 0.46 |
| Pride | | 0.11 | 0.68 |
| Political and Social Factors | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | -0.16 | 0.02* |
| Ideology | | -0.74 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.02 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | 0.01 | 0.93 |
| Race | | 0.33 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.02 | 0.53 |
| Marital Status | | 0.16 | 0.01* |
| Constant | 2.51 | | |
| Number of Cases | 553 | ***** | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 237.58 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.31 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -261.57 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, **P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry, or do you think they should not be allowed to marry? 0=should not be allowed, 1=should be allowed

Tables 4.13 and 4.14 display the results for the impact of feelings toward the candidates on attitudes about same-sex marriage. Neither model displays any of the emotional dimensions as an important influence on attitudes about same-sex marriage. As it was mentioned earlier, this issue was not an emotive topic in the context of the 2004 presidential campaign. Rather, it was a strategy to mobilize the conservative political base that advantaged Bush. While feelings did not significantly influence attitudes on same-sex marriage, there was a subset of important variables in these models that were not previously crucial. In both models, age and race were important along with ideology. Both models display that this issue was ideologically divisive, with conservatives reporting they did not support same-sex marriage. Table 4.14 also denotes that

strong Republican identity was a significant factor in opposition to the topic, which is consistent with previous observations.

Where attitudes on same-sex marriage did not reflect important emotional influences, the topic of abortion is different. While the topic of abortion seems to be an innately emotional topic, the nature of the ANES question captures different responses (and possibly mutes the emotional nature of the issue). Since this question asks respondents to consider their attitudes about whether or not funding should be increased or decreased for government funding of abortions, there is an intersection of emotional reactions and economic interests. The question was not intended to directly gauge the respondents' feelings about the morality of the topic, but whether the government should increase supplemental funds for the procedure. The findings are consistent with the context of this question.

Table 4.15 presents the findings of the influence of feelings toward Bush on opinions about federally funded abortions. The only emotion that is statistically significant is fear. Respondents who said that Bush made him or her feel fearful were supportive of government-funded abortions. On this issue, those respondents who expressed feelings of fear toward Bush quite possibly conveyed the lack of trust they had regarding his track record on reproductive health policies since one of his first executive memorandum defunded Planned Parenthood in January 2001 (Cohen 2001; Bishop 2003). Given the track record of Bush's first term, it is quite possible that respondents were expressing apprehension about future policies that Bush would endorse that affected reproductive health policies.

Table 4.15: Feelings Toward George W. Bush and Attitudes about Government Supplemented Abortion in 2004

| Independent Variable | B | Probability |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward George W. Bush | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.32 | 0.19 |
| Fear | 0.43 | 0.06** |
| Hope | -0.04 | 0.87 |
| Pride | -0.31 | 0.22 |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | -0.15 | 0.02* |
| Ideology | -0.38 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.12 |
| Gender | -0.43 | 0.02* |
| Race | 0.18 | 0.00* |
| Education | -0.01 | 0.84 |
| Marital Status | 0.10 | 0.09** |
| Constant | 0.45 | |
| Number of Cases | 587 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (11) | 157.42 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.19 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -323.61 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Would you favor or oppose a law in your state that would allow the use of government funds to help pay for the costs of abortion for women who cannot afford them?" 0=oppose, 1=favor

Table 4.16 displays the findings for influences of feelings toward Kerry regarding opinions on federally funded abortions. Consistent with previous findings, the feeling of hope is important. Respondents, who remarked that Kerry made him or her feel hope, supported federal funds to supplement state sanctioned abortion. This is also consistent with the findings in Table 4.15. It seems that in the context of the 2004 presidential election, the feelings of fear and hope were consistent among the voters who support federal funds for abortions.

Table 4.16: Feelings Toward John Kerry and Attitudes about Government Supplemented Abortion in 2004

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Feelings Toward John Kerry | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | -0.12 | 0.61 |
| Fear | -0.02 | 0.93 |
| Hope | 0.44 | 0.10** |
| Pride | -0.23 | 0.36 |
| Political and Social Factors | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | -0.22 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | -.041 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.12 |
| Gender | -0.37 | 0.05* |
| Race | 0.18 | 0.00* |
| Education | -0.07 | 0.84 |
| Marital Status | 0.11 | 0.04* |
| Constant | 0.905 | |
| Number of Cases | 579 | ***** |
| Wald Chi-Square (11) | 153.32 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.00 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.19 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -319.80 | ***** |

*P<.05, **P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Would you favor or oppose a law in your state that would allow the use of government funds to help pay for the costs of abortion for women who cannot afford them?" 0=oppose, 1=favor

A surprising outcome is revealed in the control for gender. In both tables, the results for the control for gender is negative correlated with the dependent variable, indicating that women reported that they did not support federal funds for abortion in 2004. At first this seems counter-intuitive, because of how abortion is typically framed as a reproductive health topic and a woman's issue. However, when looking at the model as a whole and considering that the morality issues here were included on the Republican agenda as mechanisms to mobilize the base, the model reflects, more accurately, the influence of conservative attitudes rather than personal preferences on policy issue that holds a great deal of personal interest for many women (Bishop 2003; Pomper 2005). Consistent with the same-sex marriage issue, the findings here

reinforce the observations that these topics were mainly included on the Republican political agenda to mobilize the party's conservative base, to insure that they turned up to vote.

Discussion: other variables of interest

Observations made about the polarized electorate in 2004 are supported by the findings discussed in the previous section. This chapter supports previous claims that voters' attitudes in 2004 were divided along partisan and issue-based divisions. Another conclusion supported by the findings here is that Bush was also very emotionally divisive.

Beyond the partisan divisions, there were other cleavages that appeared to be important among the secondary and tertiary variables in the analysis. Divisions between married and non-married persons, men and women and Black and white voters are all apparent on specific campaign issues in 2004.

Marital Status

A variable controlling for marital status in 2004 denotes an interesting dynamic in electoral politics. Traditionally, Campbell et.al (1960) found that marital status was a reliable predictor for voter mobilization and turnout. However, in this project, the findings denote a remarkable split between married couples and non-married persons. The observed splits between married and un-married voters seem to reinforce previous conclusions about the polarized electorate in 2004.

Another interpretation of these divisions in voting behavior between married and non-married voters appears consistent in all three categories of issue analysis. The so-called 'marriage gap' explains the differences in voter participation and voting behavior between married and non-married voters. More specifically, the Voter Participation Center predicts that

the marriage gap will become a reliable predictor to explain voting behavior between married and un-married women.⁵

Gender and the War in Afghanistan

The gender variable in both models testing attitudes about Afghanistan revealed that women did not support the war in Afghanistan (while they were supportive of the Iraq war). Regarding this issue, women did not express support whereas men were more likely to express positive views of Bush's activity on the terrorism issue. This particular result reinforces the gendered attitude gap that exists regarding war. Research has revealed that during the Gulf War in 1991, a noticeable gender gap on attitudes about war revealed that women were less supportive of war (Wilcox and Hewit 1996). However, in this particular context, women reported not supporting the war in Afghanistan, but then supported the war in Iraq. One possible explanation for this gendered divergence suggests that justifications for going to war mattered in the 2004 election. Unlike the Gulf War in 1991, there were two on-going wars happening in 2004, and each came with a different justification for why it was necessary.

Race

Traditionally, the political differences between black and white voters are among the sharpest of any social divides (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 2007). In 2004, polls indicated that 88 percent of the African-American vote supported John Kerry and only 41 percent of white voters supported Kerry. That was not an unusual election in that the black vote has typically supported the Democratic Party. However, the interesting observation is where the sharp divisions between white and black voters were statistically significant.

⁵ The Voter Participation Center and Lake Research Partner analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Survey, November supplements (2004, 2008, 2010). www.voterparticipation.org

On the issues regarding war and morality, there was evidence of compelling racial divisiveness. Regarding the issues of same-sex marriage and abortion, African-American voters did not support either issue. The intersection of faith in the black community has long dictated that the stances in the black community on moral issues follow traditional lines (Djupe, McDaniel, and Neiheisel 2007). However, the African-American voting block follows partisan loyalties and vote Democratic, which was the case in 2004.

Most interestingly, was the divergence in attitudes about the war in Afghanistan. For both candidates, the models reflect that white voters were largely supportive of military action in Afghanistan, but not regarding Iraq. The possible explanation here may be reflective on the make-up of the military itself. The U.S. armed forces employ a large African-American contingency (Armor 1996). If this is the case in 2004, it is quite possible that the cost of the Afghanistan war was quite personal. With the war wearing into its third year by 2004 and Bin Laden evading capture, the justification for Afghanistan may have been interpreted as irrational to those personally involved given the U.S.' goals for the war on terror.

Conclusion

The conventional wisdom pre-dating this research concerning the determinants of voting established by the *American Voter* found that party identification was the most reliable predictor of political choices. This finding supplied an unprecedented utility for explaining voting that it guides mostly all contemporary research on electoral behavior. This created a standard approach to studying political behavior that remains the optimal standard of measurement in recent research. The findings presented in this chapter add a new variable to this preferred approach to voting behavior.

There are two useful insights that expand our existing knowledge base of political behavior. First, regarding the role emotions play in electoral behavior, the findings suggest that there is an association between voters' feelings and their retrospective or prospective political evaluations. This offers a new interpretation of Huddy and Gunthorsdottir's (2000) transfer-of-affect thesis. The results in this chapter show the feelings of pride and anger are likely associated with retrospective evaluations of a candidate's political record where the feelings of hope and fear likely are associated with prospective judgments of a candidate's campaign promises. This portends that voters may transfer emotional judgments of a candidate to their appraisal of the campaign issues. In the case of 2004, this conclusion suggests that voters may have projected their feelings toward Bush onto their evaluations of campaign issues, which affirms the research question that voters' feelings toward candidates may translate into support (or rejection) of campaigns issues.

Second, it seems that partisan and independent voters alike rely on their feelings when evaluating political issues based on their feelings expressed toward a particular candidate. Partisans still rely primarily on their attachment to a party to guide vote choices. Also, partisans demonstrated that they transferred their emotional assessments toward a candidate onto political issues in 2004. In many cases, partisans were consistent on issues pertaining to security and terrorism, demonstrated significant ideological polarization. On the other hand, when factored out, the findings for the party identification variable reflected that independent voters and independent leaners tended to rely on their feelings toward either Bush or Kerry more so than their partisan counterparts to evaluate the political issues in 2004.

The nature of political campaigns is inherently emotive. Broadcast media specifically make appeals to viewers' emotions and as do most political advertising (Brader 2005, 2006;

Gulati, Just and Crigler 2004; Kaid 2004; Huddy and Gunnthorsdottir 2000). During campaigns, voters are constantly inundated with political messages and emotive imagery designed to arouse voters' passionate reasoning, which means emotional responses are integrated with potential bias and reasoned thought about the accompanying message or image. This coupled with the emotive nature of opinion-news shows and the broadcasted recycled "noise" that competes for voters' attention; it becomes necessary to examine how voters' passionate reasoning influences their political choices. The way voters feel about candidates will only become more important in the voting booth.

Chapter 5: Analysis of the Influence of Voters' Feelings Toward Presidential Candidates on Attitudes about Campaign Issues in the 2008 Election

The 2008 presidential election stands out as possibly the most historical American election. Its unique context energized segments of the electorate that typically were excluded in previous elections. In 2008, 131 million people voted, which was up from 2004 turnout by a count of 5 million. Of those figures, blacks increased turnout by 2 million voters with the highest turnout among 18 to 24 year olds. The increased turnout was offset by decreased or stagnated activity among other groups, causing overall 2008 figures to remain constant at the 2004 level of 64%⁶. Women had a higher voting rate than men at 66% (compared with men at 64%). More analysis quickly revealed that women overwhelmingly supported Barak Obama at 56% compared to 49% of men as opposed to John McCain, despite his running mate Sarah Palin.⁷

The political context in 2008 was unique because it furnished three unique variables of interest. First, it was a pioneering American presidential campaign to feature a Black man as a major front-runner nominee, women made inroads showcased by Hillary Clinton's competitive Democratic primaries, and the Republican Party nominated its first woman vice presidential candidate, Sarah Palin. This chapter continues the analysis of the research question *do voters' feelings about political candidates influence their support of political issues?*

Political Overview of the 2008 Campaign:

The political context of the 2008 presidential election was highlighted by voter dissatisfaction with the incumbent president coupled with uncertainty about the country's future (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009). Election scholars (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010; Abramowitz 2010; Cook 2010; Jacobson 2010; Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009), suggest that Bush's second term set the stage for the 2008 presidential campaign essentially being another

⁶ US Census Bureau at www.uscensus.gov

⁷ The Center for American Women in Politics at www.CAWP.rutgers/womens vote watch. November 2008.

referendum on the Bush administration and the Republican Party. According to Jacobson (2009), a sitting president is the party's most prominent figure representing the party and Bush's performance in his second term impacts the party image and its attractiveness.

Negative views of Bush inevitably surfaced during the 2008 primary season. The economy became particularly problematic issue long before the financial crisis in September shortly after the Republican convention. Regarding foreign affairs, Bush was returned to the White House because of the Iraq agenda. In 2006, Bush approved of troop surges in Iraq to reinforce the situation there. Whatever benefits the Bush administration might have enjoyed during the second term was counteracted by the steady economic decline, which left Bush with the lowest approval rating of any president in the 70 years of polling history (Jacobson 2009). Bush's ratings were falling mostly among Republicans and Independents; ratings among Democrats had been the lowest since the re-election campaign (Crotty 2009; Jacobson 2009; Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010).

The 2008 campaigns tailored their political messages in large part to address this situation. Democrats were advantaged by the political mood in 2008, which made the campaign strategy almost effortless. First, Obama needed to remind the voting public of its dissatisfaction with Bush era policies and link John McCain to Bush. Second, Obama needed to endear himself to the public, but there were two areas where voters had reservations about Obama's candidacy. First, was his relatively short political career which signaled he was a relatively unseasoned politician and second, his racial identity (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009; Abramowitz 2010). Before 2008 African American candidates had not garnered serious financial support and had the realistic probability of winning a major party's nomination.

Given Bush's unpopularity, Republicans faced an uphill battle and McCain's campaign reflected the stress and awkwardness presented by that hurdle. McCain was in an uncomfortable position because he needed to separate himself from the Bush colored Republican label and not risk alienating the party base by being too critical of Bush or his policies (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009). The leading problem McCain's campaign struggled with was the lack of a focused and defined strategy. McCain never effectively solved this problem and was never able to take the upper hand from Obama (Ceaser, Bush and Pitney 2009; Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010).

During the general election, the campaigns needed to address three serious issues. First, the economy slipped steadily during Bush's second term and finally confronted devastating shocks in September 2008. Second, Iraq and Afghanistan needed a more decisive focus and a plan for American troop withdrawal. Third, the growth of executive power under Bush made several voters anxious about the protections of civil liberties (Crotty 2009; Jacobson 2009; Abramowitz 2010; Cook 2010; Finn and Glaser 2010; Kenski, Hardy and Jamieson 2010). Besides the gender and racial dynamics of the 2008 presidential campaign, another unique factor was that it was the first election since 1952 that did not have an incumbent on the ballot (Abramowitz 2008; Holbrook 2008; Crotty 2010; Jacobson 2010).

Campaign Issues

If 2004 was the election determined by international affairs and the threat of terrorism, the 2008 election was determined by domestic issues and the economic crisis. As noted previously, the economy was already a major issue before the economic crisis in September 2008. However, when the collapse finally did occur, it appropriately consumed the attention of both candidates, their campaigns and provided an opportunity for Democrats to draw attention to

the failures of Bush-era economic policies. In the wake of the economic collapse, analysts likened the impact to the effects of the Great Depression (Crotty 2009; Lewis-Beck and Tien 2009; Holbrook 2010). This language summoned the desperate images of bread lines in voters' minds and led to frenetic anxieties. Both candidates suspended their campaigns to return to Washington and vote on bailout packages to rescue ailing financial firms (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010; Sabato 2010).

McCain's campaign responded to ongoing public insecurity by assuring voters that the pillars of the economy were stable by stating that he "still believes that the fundamentals of the economy are strong."⁸ In order shore up public confidence in the stability of the essential economic foundations, McCain's team denied comments about the economy and shifted the campaign's focus back to Obama and his, in McCain's view, politically inexperienced record (Armbruster 2008).

Obama's campaign approach seemed aggressive and proactive by proposing a major jobs initiative that was reminiscent of the 1930s Roosevelt era (WPA) public works program (Crotty 2009; Holbrook 2010). Much of the media banter conjured depression-era images and emotions and the Democrats responded by with campaign rhetoric that rallied the traditional base of political support, the New Deal agenda (Sabato 2010).

There were several important issues on the agenda in 2008, but they were eclipsed by the economic crisis that dominated the campaign. For the most part, much of the agenda conformed to traditional and familiar party issues with the necessary modifications and redesigns to be relevant in the current context (Crotty 2009). There was agreement on only one point, that there were serious problems and changes were needed, but there was no consensus about the causes of

⁸ Quoted in Armbruster, Ben "Top McCain Aide: 'If we keep Talking About the Economic Crisis, We're Going to Lose'" October 2008.

the country's problems or the solutions (Abramowitz 2010). Social issues presented a relatively minor role in the contest.

Both campaigns focused on the same issues, but had different approaches to each issue. The war in Iraq and Afghanistan was a major concern in 2008. McCain's campaign offered interpretations of the key objectives about the war. The first was to achieve victory. Second, no timetable should be set for withdrawal. Third, the number of troops deployed to Afghanistan should be increased. In contrast, Obama's approach offered a timetable for troop withdrawal from Iraq and to redirect those troops to Afghanistan. It was the timetable for troop withdrawal resonated voters (Crotty 2009; Spitzer 2009)

Healthcare reform was an issue that received intense attention on the campaign trail and had demonstrated the Democratic primary conflict. Ideological divisions were apparent in the proposals for health care reform. Obama proposed a universal health care program, which extended coverage for pre-existing conditions, children and the elderly and included an increase of tax on wealthier citizens. McCain's proposal had a free market orientation that emphasized privatized medicine. Health insurance coverage was to be optional and tax credits were proposed for individual and family premiums (Maioni 2009).

The other large issue that garnered attention during the campaign was energy policy. Fuel prices globally were rising and questions pressed the candidates about domestic oil exploration and energy dependence. Again, along the traditional ideological lines, McCain supported privatized industry's oil production and exploration coupled with financial incentives and rewards (Crotty 2009; Spitzer 2009). Obama proposed regulation on oil and fuel companies, subsidies for alternative energy exploration and he wanted to impose greener fuel efficiency standards for vehicles (Spitzer 2009).

These were the major issues the candidates debated about during the 2008 presidential campaign; however, they were largely supplanted by the economic exigency for the remainder of the campaign from September until November. The strategies each campaign employed then worked to frame the issues along typical party lines and rhetoric. The Obama campaign exploited every opportunity to link McCain to Bush on every issue, and most strongly on the economy.

Candidate Strategies

The political context in 2008 demanded different campaign strategies than what had worked in 2004. First, in 2004, Bush was running for re-election and his campaign was largely a referendum on his first term (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007). In 2008, both the Republican and Democrat strategies were campaigning against the Bush legacy (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009). The challenge presented to the Republican Party was a rather problematic one. Bush's second term damaged a great deal of the public's trust in the Republican agenda. This proved advantageous for the Democrats' campaign to exploit the Republican failures. John McCain was better positioned than any other Republican contender to campaign in a fashion that reinvented the Republican image in the wake of Bush (Sabato 2010). To McCain's advantage, his political rivalry and friction with Bush (demonstrated by McCain's legislative voting record against some key Bush initiatives) enabled him to draw 31% of votes from individuals who disliked Bush⁹ along with mention of McCain's military credentials and service (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2009).

The Republican approach was two-fold: first, to separate McCain from the Bush era and second (a focus that backfired) to cast Obama as the naïve opponent with little political

⁹ Statistic reported at The Roper Center: Public Opinion Archives. www.ropercenter.uconn.edu

experience (Kenski, Hardy, and Jamieson 2010). The Republican strategy tried to juxtapose McCain's credentials against Obama's lack of them; experience versus little.

McCain emphasized his own record and experience, with the intention to draw distinctions between himself and his opponent's relative inexperience and vulnerabilities (Cook 2010). That, of course, was made difficult in July 2008, when Obama went on a ten-day international 'good will' tour (Kenski, Hardy, and Jamieson 2010).

During the general election, the Obama campaign enjoyed several advantages that arguably any Democratic presidential nominee in 2008 would have relished. Even though political polarization has been a part of the campaign landscape since 2000, it benefitted the Democratic Party with an increase in party identifiers (Abramowitz 2010). The US Census Bureau reported that the number of identifiers grew in Bush's second term.¹⁰ The economic conditions were such that it facilitated a mood of pessimism, making it relatively easy for the Democratic platform to indict the Bush era for the current economic failures that were playing out in 2008.

The success of Obama's campaign strategy relied on well-functioning grassroots networks (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010; Campbell 2010). The success was linked to its clever harnessing of the despondent mood of the electorate, aided by grassroots donors posting editorials on the campaign's website Campbell 2010). The campaign messages of "Hope"; "Change"; "Fired up, ready to go" and "Yes we can" successfully defined the Democratic issue platform and altogether different from the status quo.

The notable and transformative power the message and emotion 'hope' is denoted in how the message itself was constructed. The root of this strategic frame did not solely reside in the impetus of donor website comments. Obama's message of hope also appealed to the sense of

¹⁰ US Census Bureau

urgency—that he was the candidate with the plan to mitigate the impending harms of failed Bush era policies (Kenski, Hardy and Jamieson 2009; Jacobson 2010; Sabato 2010). The sense of urgency coupled, with the dismal news about the financial fallout, spurred Obama’s campaign to evoke symbolic imagery and feelings referring to the New Deal era (Sabato 2010). Obama strategists cleverly drew on themes outlined by the notable historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.’s book titled *The Politics of Hope* (1963). Obama’s message recast the idea of American nostalgia rooted in, as Schlesinger termed it, *American Liberalism*. Obama’s campaign message captured Schlesinger’s assessment of the American experience; “here at last, [men] were free to inscribe their own aspirations in society without the clog of corruptions of the accumulated evils of history” (Schlesinger 63, 1956). Obama’s campaign ads were underscored by this message, channeling such ideas using phrases such as “let’s bring America back to a time...” and “change has come to America”.¹¹ These messages highlighted the general public attitude that policy in America was on the “wrong track” and that America had been abandoned by eight years of Republican policy. Obama’s campaign messages framed an idea that there was an uncorrupted, ‘authentic’ version of America to ‘get back to’ (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010).

Race and Gender: Key Research Question

That Obama’s nomination was innately emotive rests on the fact that he represented an historical moment in American political history. This project examines the impact of the feelings expressed towards political candidates, but there is a lot of context not captured in the ANES variables used to measure emotion. The legacy of racial relationships in American society and politics points to systemic injustices. Identities involving race and gender (and the intersection of both) historically have been justified as reasons to lock participants out of the electoral process. To consolidate the impact of Obama’s racial identity into a single variable that

¹¹ From archived 2008 campaign ads footage; Democratic National Committee (DNC)

expresses either “hope” or “pride” limits interpretations about what those positive feelings may mean and their electoral effects.

Previous research has asked the question about the electoral effects of racial politics and more specifically, ‘racializing’ elections (Philpot 2004). In previous elections, the racialization of an election simply meant drawing attention to racial and gendered diversity represented in a campaign or a president’s cabinet. For example, in 2000, the Republican Party’s convention was careful to showcase the appearances of both Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice (as well as George W. Bush’s nephew who has Hispanic heritage), even though the party’s platform continued its traditional political positions on race relations and affirmative action (Philpot 2004). Before 2008, the only representations of racial diversity were descriptive and not substantive.

Up to this point, research has addressed the subject of racial identities in politics because, “the current political system is still defined by a racial hierarchy and white domination in the electoral arena” (Liu 9, 2009). Attention to the role of race in the American political environment has spurred countless theories to understand its influence on political behavior. Three of them are examined here for their relevance in the 2008 campaign.

First, the theory of *American Majoritarianism* interprets racial minorities as a secondary social class in American politics because of whites’ majority status in the electorate (Liu 9, 2009). According to the US Census data, however this interpretation is no longer accurate since Asian and Latino populations are the fastest growing in the United States and mobilized in large numbers in 2008.¹² Second, Swim and Miller’s (1999) *white guilt* thesis suggests that white voters compensate for racial guilt while voting. When applied to the 2008 campaign, it suggests

¹² Figures obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau: Report—“Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2008: Population Characteristics.” Issued May 2010

that open racist attitudes have largely lost its moral appeal to white voters (Liu 2009; Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Kinder and Sears 1981). Third, possibly the most applicable to the 2008 presidential campaign is the *white enthusiasm* thesis. This thesis may offer an effective interpretation about the behavior of white voters in the 2008 election. This theory suggests that a majority of white voters broadly accepted Barak Obama as a serious contender for the presidency. By accepting Obama as a serious candidate and as a black man in American politics, the white enthusiasm thesis explains that white voters acknowledged the legacy of racial inequality and viewed the 2008 election as an opportunity to personally condemn racism by voting for Obama. Finally, the thesis suggests that white voters who supported Obama hoped that their vote communicated political goodwill with the hope of alleviating racial tensions (Liu 5, 2009).

These theories on race and politics do not suggest that the social and political cleavage between white and black voters is gone, but they offer analytical frameworks to examine the racial dynamics in the 2008 election. While Obama's racial identity was a cornerstone of the political campaign that inevitably drew attention to the state of race relations in the U.S., the traditional treatment of racial stereotypes in the political arena seemed muted in 2008. Given that race was a dominant political cue in the campaign, it was also one of the first campaigns where media frames did not consistently portray negative messages or images of a black candidate (Sinclair-Chapman and Price 2008).

Obama's campaign strategy demonstrated sensitivity to voters' traditional perceptions of black candidates. His campaign strategy demonstrated Obama had a delicate path to traverse. He was the first black man to become a central and high profile political figure, and with that the campaign implemented a highly effective 'race-neutral' strategy (Harris 2009; Kenski, Hardy

and Jamieson 2010). Obama's priority on neutralizing his racial identity served two functions. First, the goal was to attract independents and Republican defectors. Second, the de-racialized strategy included a focus on getting Americans beyond racial, ethnic and religious divisions (Harris 2009). From a pragmatic stand point, instead of campaigning as a black man, Obama wanted to campaign as a human being first and a black man second, relying on philosophical foundations evoking phrases such as "shared humanity" and "transcending the hierarchical idea of whiteness and blackness" (Campbell 2010). This approach challenged traditional views of black politics that usually focused on improving the status of blacks as a group. In 2008, the symbolic achievement represented by Obama's candidacy may have signaled a shift in black Americans' attitudes on whether blacks should think of themselves as individuals or as a part of a group (Harris 2009).

McCain's campaign strategy made efforts to demonstrate racial sensitivity. Instead of attacking Obama's racial identity as a political weakness, the Republicans satirized his celebrity status in political ads (Obama's celebrity status and the "chosen one" themed ads referenced the classic Hollywood scene from the *Ten Commandments*). The Democrats rebuffed these ads as inane and juvenile. However, they were personally beneficial for McCain as a means to address his anger at Obama's domination of media (and the outpouring of racial enthusiasm) without personally attacking Obama's identity (Ceaser, Busch, and Pitney 2009; Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010; Kenski, Hardy and Jamieson 2010). Especially since the demographic profiles of the Republican Party show that it is a racially homogenous organization with only two percent of the party's convention delegates being black (Crotty 2009). To wage an overt attack on Obama's racial identity would have likely produced damaging media attention for McCain connecting him to images associated with Jim Crow styled politics (Reed 2010).

While the Republican's did not overtly address Obama's identity, Obama did it himself. He worked to de-emphasize his identity of being black by showcasing his white heritage from his mother and his African father. The goal in showcasing his parents was to achieve a foundation to the claim of a multi-ethnic heritage, to neutralize his "blackness" in the media (Clayton 2010; Jones 2010).

However, it was clear that Obama's nomination generated unprecedented political fervor and emotional enthusiasm. This alarmed McCain's team because the candidate publicly expressed concern that the sweep of emotional energy toward Obama was putting the election in danger of being over taken by irrationality (Liu 3, 2009). McCain was savvy enough to understand the liability of negatively racializing the campaign—the media already emphasized it enough that the Republican campaign wisely put distance between the candidate and references to Obama's identity.

Summary of Analysis: The Impact of Emotions in the 2008 Election

Returning to the key question being explored in this project: *do voters' feelings about political candidates influence their evaluation of campaign issues?* Analysis was conducted using survey data from the 2008 American National Election Studies (ANES) time series pre-election sample. The findings in this chapter reflects the standard view in the political science literature, that presidential elections are referendums on the performance of the present administrations during election years (Abramson, Aldrich, Rohde 2010). To explore this, election survey data from the ANES 2008 time series pre-election survey were explored. The dependent variables represent issues that were on the political agendas in 2008.

To be consistent with 2004 and achieve valid comparisons across two presidential elections, the dependent variables are derived from similar questions in the ANES surveys in

2004 and 2008. The dependent variables are based on questions concerning Bush era policies. Since the ANES question asked respondents to consider policies of the Bush administration, the questions may activate two cognitive phenomena. These questions are likely to engage not just partisan cues and perception judgments of McCain's party, but also retrospective policy assessments (Fiorina 1978; Granberg 1993), which advantaged the Democratic platform in developing the "Its time for a change" tag line.

For comparability, this chapter examines same three issue categories there were examined in 2004, domestic issues, foreign affairs issues and morality issues. The domestic topics include 3 issues that were selected for analysis; 1) the economy, 2) environmental policy, and 3) healthcare. On foreign affairs, two issues were analyzed, the attitudes on foreign relations and the war in Iraq. Finally, the same-sex marriage issue measures morality. The morality category was restricted to a single question in 2008 because the ANES survey omitted the abortion question. Six issues total were regressed against three sets of controls. The first set is the ANES measure for various emotions: pride, hope, fear and anger. The second set of control variables is the political determinants such as party identification and ideology. The final set of independent variables is the standard controls for demographic information.

The Impact of Voters' Feelings Toward John McCain and Barak Obama

Most every presidential campaign is unique and quite idiosyncratic. Much of the political context has been mapped out in previous sections, but here, the analysis of feelings toward McCain and Obama is both unique and uniform. Also at play in the 2008 presidential campaign was the referendum on the incumbent party (Jacobson 2009). The findings in this section offer support to previous observations about the political referendum of George W. Bush that took place in 2008. The reason for being so though is more a logistical factor than anything else. The

2008 ANES survey questions were similar if not the replicated from the 2004 version of the pre-election survey. The questions ask respondents to consider their attitudes about Bush's handling of political issues and policies. In all three categories, the dependent variables are based upon questions that required respondents to engage retrospective political assessments of George W. Bush. Therefore, the results here not only suggest that the 2008 presidential election was a referendum of Bush, but how the context and a highly effective campaign message centering on the feelings of hope delivered a decisive victory to Barak Obama.

Domestic Issues:

The presidential campaign in 2008 heavily emphasized the domestic agenda and, especially after the rather unexpected financial crisis perpetrated by sub-prime mortgage lending industry debacle (Crotty 2009). The economic crisis hit home for many voters more than any other crisis since the Great Depression. It reported that nearly 90 percent of registered voters expressed worry over the country's economic direction and nearly 70 percent were worried about their own financial forecast (Crotty 33). Scores of voters were directly impacted by the financial collapse, which made the question of the economy central to the general campaign.

In this case, the dependent variable, attitudes on the economy, did not directly capture attitudes about the economic crisis in September 2008. The ANES pre-election survey was conducted from mid-September to October 2008, and asked respondents about whether they approved of the way Bush handled economic policy in his second term in office. This question may get at some implicit reactions to the economic failure or latent blame placed on Bush for the late September crisis, but it is not a direct measurement. With that said, data indicate that voters' feelings toward the candidates were important to how they evaluated the issue.

Recall that the ANES questions for both 2004 and 2008 activate retrospective assessments. In this case, both sets of questions require respondents to retroactively evaluate George W. Bush. The data displayed in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, suggest a couple of things, first, for McCain, the feeling of hope is correlated with positive assessments of Bush's economic policy.

Table 5.1: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on Attitudes about the Economy in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.287 | 0.25 |
| Fear | | -0.449 | 0.05* |
| Hope | | 0.495 | 0.03* |
| Pride | | 0.406 | 0.16 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.419 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.2254 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.002 | 0.662 |
| Gender | | 0.231 | 0.235 |
| Race | | 0.136 | 0.395 |
| Education | | -0.023 | 0.504 |
| Marital Status | | 0.060 | 0.329 |
| Constant | -5.121 | | |
| Number of Cases | 902 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 242.46 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2626 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -340.470 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy? 0=disapprove, 1=approve

In this specific case, the emotion of hope was important to McCain's campaign. Here, within the context of 2008, the feeling of hope also conveyed a message of trust in John McCain. The electorate was impacted by the anxieties associated with the financial crisis, and the Republican base in particular, expressed its hope in McCain and trust in his capabilities. Second, this base of support may have grown out of McCain's success in divorcing himself from the

Bush-era Republican agenda (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009). Alternately, respondents who reported the negative feeling of fear towards McCain also expressed negative retroactive assessments of Bush's handling of the economy.

Table 5.2: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama on Attitudes about the Economy in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.130 | 0.53 |
| Fear | | 0.093 | 0.67 |
| Hope | | -0.576 | 0.01* |
| Pride | | -0.283 | 0.23 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.481 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.198 | 0.03* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.002 | 0.70 |
| Gender | | 0.271 | 0.16 |
| Race | | 0.123 | 0.43 |
| Education | | 0.016 | 0.64 |
| Marital Status | | 0.060 | 0.33 |
| Constant | -4.421 | | |
| Number of Cases | 905 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 242.49 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2630 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -339.814 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy? 0=disapprove, 1=approve

For Barak Obama, on the question of the economy, the data shows that only one emotion was important during that campaign. The feelings of hope were very compelling in the Obama campaign. Voters' who expressed they had feelings of hope inspired by Obama, also negatively evaluated Bush and his handling of the economy. This is not entirely unexpected. It is, however, interesting that the emotion of hope is the only emotion that registers for Obama. This may have resulted for a couple of reasons. The first, this most likely indicates the success of the focused campaign message that proliferated from Obama's campaign-- "A change we can believe in" which was crafted to inspire the specific feelings of hope (as is recurrent in the results

throughout). Second, coupled with an effective campaign strategy, according to Meisenhelder (1982), the feeling of hope is the basis of trust and that which makes social order possible (195). Looking at voter reactions in terms of the financial crisis, the feeling of hope clearly conveyed the desire to establish a more solid, stable social and financial order in 2008.

The next issue on the domestic agenda is the exploration of the environment. This issue was selected partly due to the energy agenda that both candidates addressed. In the campaign both candidates discussed their positions on oil drilling and exploration. This had also been an issue in the Bush administration, but was largely supplanted by the war in Iraq. In the summer of 2008, environment was back on the agenda. The dependent variable is based on the ANES question about Bush's handling of environmental policy.

The results displayed for John McCain in Table 5.3 show that feelings of hope and fear were important on this question. The positive and negative emotions are divided along familiar lines. The voters' who reported that they had feelings of hope toward McCain also positively assessed Bush's position on the environment. This is particularly interesting because of the positive evaluation of the Bush policy on the environment. It is not wholly unanticipated that the positive emotions correlate with positive retrospective evaluations of the Bush-era policy agenda. The McCain agenda supported energy policy that favored oil exploration and renewable energy sources without government subsidies (Crotty 2009a; 2009b; Spitzer 2009). This was not much of a departure from the positions of the Bush administration. However, McCain emphasized privatized renewable energy, which may have created enough of a separation from Bush to win the loyalty of the Republican base.

Table 5.3: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on Attitudes about the Environmental Policy in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.306 | 0.13 |
| Fear | | -0.725 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.630 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | 0.163 | 0.46 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.206 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.374 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.020 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | 0.143 | 0.41 |
| Race | | -0.182 | 0.17 |
| Education | | 0.031 | 0.32 |
| Marital Status | | -0.037 | 0.48 |
| Constant | -2.012 | | |
| Number of Cases | 836 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 274.92 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2524 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -401.070 | ***** | ***** |
| *P<.05, ** P<.10 | | | |

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the environment? 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Also expected were the results along negative emotional dimensions. For McCain, voters who reported that McCain made him or her feel fearful, also negatively assessed Bush's environmental policies. The data that reports the emotion of fear as important to these issues may signal the success of the Obama campaign linking McCain closely to Bush. The emotion of fear is a reactionary one causing people to feel apprehension and uncertainty. It may be the case that respondents were reacting to McCain as a symbol of status quo in 2008.

**Table 5.4: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama about
Environmental Policy in 2008**

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|--|----------|--------------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.238 | 0.23 |
| Fear | 0.205 | 0.30 |
| Hope | -1.916 | 0.00* |
| Pride | -0.148 | 0.47 |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.236 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.320 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.017 | 0.00* |
| Gender | 0.117 | 0.50 |
| Race | -0.011 | 0.44 |
| Education | 0.013 | 0.66 |
| Marital Status | -0.042 | 0.42 |
| Constant | -1.419 | |
| Number of Cases | 837 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 266.02 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2435 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -413.136 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: “Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the environment? 0=disapprove, 1=approve

The data reported for Obama in Table 5.4 show an expected result that the feelings of hope were again important in affecting attitudes about the environment. Here, voters who said that Obama made he or she feel hopeful, also negatively judged Bush’s position on the environment. This was particularly the case among young voters. In 2008, the youth vote was mobilized more than any other presidential election since 1992 (Abramson, Aldrich, Rohde 2010; Sabato 2010). The environmental issues seemed to resonate more strongly among the youth than the older voters, which may be one motivation for the Democratic strategy to emphasize it in specific contexts despite the predominance and weight of the economic concerns.

The last issue discussed on the domestic agenda was health care. This issue was an important component of the campaign before the economic crisis became divisive. 2008 was not the first election that politicized the topic of health care. The issue has been highly divisive ever since the 1992 presidential election with then President Clinton proposed comprehensive healthcare reform (Maioni 2009). Both parties jockeyed for political ownership of this issue. The Democrats claimed the system reform angle and Republicans supported the privatized status quo. With this being the case, the polarized nature of the health care debate has endured several electoral cycles with little regard to who the candidates have been. The data here show that 2008 was no different.

Table 5.5: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on Attitudes about Health Care Policy in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.080 | 0.73 |
| Fear | | -0.703 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.478 | 0.06** |
| Pride | | 0.583 | 0.03* |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.345 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.399 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.021 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | 0.028 | 0.88 |
| Race | | 0.002 | 0.95 |
| Education | | 0.026 | 0.44 |
| Marital Status | | -0.040 | 0.50 |
| Constant | -3.547 | | |
| Number of Cases | 852 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 279.45 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2884 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -344.799 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling health care?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Unlike the two previous issues, the feelings that impact attitudes on this issue are more dynamic. For McCain, Table 5.5 displays that three emotions are important influences on attitudes. Pride, hope and fear are statistically significant in this model. The emotions fear, hope and pride are significant in this model. First, the feelings of pride and hope are correlated with positive assessments of Bush's previous positions on health care, which was the status quo position of private health insurance, prescriptions and overall, optional participation (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010). Specifically, the emotional dimension of pride explained something different than hope in this context.

Recall that in the previous chapter, the feeling of pride conveyed the meaning of satisfaction (Barber 1983). This involves a retrospective judgment of Bush's second term on this issue. Respondents relied on their own feelings of pride toward McCain to make judgments of satisfaction about the health care issue. Barber's observation continues along this line and notes that trust is involved in assessments involving pride and hope, "trust involves expectations that the social order will continue to exist, that people who claim expertise will perform competently" (Barber, 79). Based on this observation, it can be said that voters' who said that McCain makes them feel prideful or hopeful conveyed that they approved of the status quo on the topic of health care and trusted McCain to continue operations as they existed.

Conversely, the feeling of fear toward McCain correlated with negative evaluations of Bush's health care policies and positions. This reaction to McCain conveyed that voters who felt fearful likely conveyed their apprehension about the direction of the American health care system (Maioni 2009). This attitude was likely held among Obama supporters of the lower socio-economic statuses (presented in later tables) because of what the Obama health care proposal offered. One main component of his proposal included an extension of coverage for pre-existing

conditions for children and for the elderly (Crotty 2009a; 2009b; Spitzer 2009), all of which include key demographics of the electorate that supported Obama.

Table 5.6: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama on Attitudes about Health Care Policy in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.031 | 0.88 |
| Fear | | -0.670 | 0.67 |
| Hope | | -0.990 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | -0.541 | 0.07** |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.328 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.345 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.020 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | -0.795 | -0.68 |
| Race | | 0.173 | 0.45 |
| Education | | -0.001 | 0.97 |
| Marital Status | | -0.046 | 0.44 |
| Constant | -2.223 | | |
| Number of Cases | 852 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 284.41 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2941 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -341.249 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling health care?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Table 5.6 displays the results for Barak Obama on the question of health care. Here, both positive emotional dimensions are important to the attitudes about health care. Both pride and hope are statistically significant. Given the context of the Obama campaign, its message and its policy position on health care, the meaning of the feelings of hope and pride on these attitudes are interesting to unpack. To begin, the positive feelings, as expected, conveyed negative assessments of Bush-era policy positions on health care. Next, the coupling of hope and pride conveyed both satisfaction and trust. In this context, pride does not convey the retrospective assessment of satisfaction, as in 'job well done'. Finally, pride conveyed a statement more about

Obama's candidacy and trust in his competence to govern better than Bush did. In sum, this message conveyed that voters believed 'Obama will do a better job than Bush.'

Foreign Affairs

This category of issues explores two topics, attitudes on foreign relations and the war in Iraq. For the purposes of comparison, the dependent variable for foreign policy is taken from the ANES question asking respondents to evaluate the previous President's handling of foreign policy. In this case, respondents are asked to evaluate their thoughts on Bush's foreign policy. With the impending change of commander-in-chief, this category was a part of the political rhetoric calling for a referendum on Bush era policies. The data reported here seems to be the most direct reflection of the referendum on the Bush administration and the Republican Party.

Both models reported in this section display stark differences in the feelings toward McCain and Obama respectively. Table 5.7 shows that all four emotional dimensions were important determinants on attitudes about foreign relations in 2008. The fact that all four emotional dimensions are important also suggests that the electorate was polarized on this particular topic. To get at this point, reviewing the impact that negative feelings toward McCain had on this topic, the data show that voters who reported that McCain made him or her feel angry or fearful, also indicated that they did not approve of how Bush handled foreign relations during second term in office.

As with positive emotions, the different meanings of the negative emotions are important. In this context, anger and fear conveyed two different messages. These attitudes probably have more to do with retrospective evaluations of Bush's second term, than direct reactions to John McCain (Crotty 2009a; 2009b; Jacobson 2009; Spitzer 2009). However, McCain, identified by the Republican label, drew negative emotional reactions that signaled the electorate's fatigue

with the Republican agenda. Here, anger represents an attitude that is reactionary to the status quo and is motivated to punish a figure responsible for violating public trust. Where fear represents the feelings of apprehension and powerlessness, reflective of voter fatigue with the Republican issue agenda in 2008, voters who expressed that McCain made him or her feel fearful, conveyed their feelings of powerlessness over the direction of the country should McCain be elected.

Table 5.7: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on Attitudes about Foreign Relations in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.462 | 0.04* |
| Fear | | -0.582 | 0.01* |
| Hope | | 0.752 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | 0.434 | 0.09** |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identify | | 0.405 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.345 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.006 | 0.31 |
| Gender | | -0.077 | 0.68 |
| Race | | -0.274 | 0.09** |
| Education | | 0.071 | 0.04* |
| Marital Status | | 0.357 | 0.54 |
| Constant | -4.604 | | |
| Number of Cases | 909 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 423.48 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.3740 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -354.345 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling relations with foreign countries?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

Table 5.8: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama on Attitudes about Foreign Relations in 2008

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | -0.040 | 0.84 |
| Fear | 0.437 | 0.00* |
| Hope | -0.678 | 0.00* |
| Pride | -0.167 | 0.45 |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.458 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | 0.292 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.005 | 0.36 |
| Gender | -0.154 | 0.41 |
| Race | -0.241 | 0.12 |
| Education | 0.065 | 0.05* |
| Marital Status | 0.026 | 0.65 |
| Constant | -3.888 | |
| Number of Cases | 908 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 410.49 | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.3643 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -358.107 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling relations with foreign countries?" 0=disapprove, 1=approve

For Obama, Table 5.8 displays the impact of feelings toward him had on the attitudes about foreign relations. There are two emotions that are important to this model, hope and fear. This is the first time that the feeling of fear is important in relation to Obama. This may also suggest a divisive character within the electorate as the divisions are along predictable lines. Looking at the emotion of fear, the data indicates that voters who said that Obama made him or her feel fearful also indicated that they positively evaluated Bush's handling of foreign relations in his second term. This particular backlash against Obama may represent a couple of influences. First, the feeling of fear represents a backlash against Obama's proposed 16-month exit strategy

from Iraq (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009). Second, the feeling of fear toward Obama as a potential commander-in-chief reflects an attitude of general racial backlash.

Table 5.9: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on the Attitudes about the Iraq War in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | -0.173 | 0.45 |
| Fear | | -0.711 | 0.00* |
| Hope | | 0.987 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | 0.616 | 0.02* |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.249 | 0.00* |
| Ideology | | 0.463 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.007 | 0.25 |
| Gender | | -0.179 | 0.34 |
| Race | | 0.152 | 0.32 |
| Education | | 0.031 | 0.37 |
| Marital Status | | 0.005 | 0.92 |
| Constant | -4.862 | | |
| Number of Cases | 909 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 335.37 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.3228 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -351.818 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth the cost or not?" 0=not worth the cost, 1=worth the cost

In the McCain model, the controls for race¹³ and education reveal unexpected and compelling findings that reveal a new dimension involved in what voters' think about this issue. When factored out, the race variable indicates that non-white respondents did not support Bush's

¹³ Race did not appear in the Obama model

foreign policy, while it reflected that levels of education mattered in respondents' evaluations of Bush's foreign policy.

The second issue examined in this category is the question of Iraq. This question is consistent with 2004 in that it asks respondents to consider whether they think the war was worth the cost. For McCain, Table 5.9 displays that this topic was still emotionally divisive. When respondents were asked to evaluate the Iraq war and determine whether or not it was worth the cost, their positive and negative feelings were important determinants on their attitudes. In 2008, McCain's position on Iraq was to first, achieve victory. Second, set no timetable for withdrawal and third, increase troops in Afghanistan (Crotty 2009; Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010). Voters who expressed that McCain made him or her feel proud or hopeful had also assessed that the war was worth the cost. This is also most likely reflecting the Republican base of support coupled with pride in McCain's own veteran and Vietnam P.O.W. status (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010).

On the other hand, fatigue over the country's longest military action registered negative feelings. Respondents, who said that McCain made them feel fearful, also reported that they did not think the war in Iraq was worth the cost. Here, the term cost could mean anything from 'financial' to 'human' cost. Nevertheless, it added up and many voters grew tired of Iraq and Afghanistan. Feelings of fear reflected both fatigue and hopelessness in McCain's plan that committed the U.S. to military action without an end in sight.

Table 5.10: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama on Attitudes about the Iraq War in 2008

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | 0.115 | 0.582 |
| Fear | 0.745 | 0.000 |
| Hope | -0.656 | 0.004* |
| Pride | -0.155 | 0.494 |
| Political Variables | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identity | 0.362 | 0.000* |
| Ideology | 0.390 | 0.000* |
| Demographics | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.006 | 0.281 |
| Gender | -0.307 | 0.104 |
| Race | 0.170 | 0.248 |
| Education | 0.029 | 0.388 |
| Marital Status | -0.029 | 0.628 |
| Constant | -3.987 | |
| Number of Cases | 911 | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 321.72 | ***** |
| Prob > χ^2 | 0.000 | ***** |
| Pseudo R^2 | 0.3113 | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -355.268 | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Taking everything into account, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth the cost or not?" 0=not worth the cost, 1=worth the cost

In the Obama model displayed in Table 5.10, as with the domestic issues, the only feeling that registers is the emotion of hope. Consistent with expectations, feelings of hope reported for this issue signal two things. First, voters who Obama made feel hopeful were energized by their prospective assessments of Obama as commander-in-chief. Obama has established a timeline for troop withdrawal from Iraq (that was endorsed internationally during his diplomatic tour). Second, Obama established a clearly defined plan of action that focused on anti-terrorist efforts in Afghanistan (Crotty 2009).

Consistent with the findings from the previous chapter, the data here suggest that on the issue of the war in Iraq, the feelings associated with prospective and retrospective assessments are consistent. Retrospective assessments for McCain and his position on Iraq yielded feelings

of fear about him and his plans, while prospective assessments of Obama and his proposal for troop withdrawal yielded feelings of hope about a plan to end U.S. involvement in Iraq.

Morality

The last category of issues examined for the 2008 presidential campaign is morality issues. The ANES 2008 survey questions on morality issues vary from those asked in 2004. For comparison the consistent salient topic in both surveys is the question on same-sex marriage. Related to the issue of same-sex marriage, in 2008 the Democratic Party advocated the repeal of the military's Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) policy: During that summer, Obama announced that if elected, he would repeal DADT (Reinke, Smith and Jensen 2010).

This issue was a politically compelling topic in the 2008 presidential campaign. It was largely supplanted by the focus on the economic crisis. However, it consistently surfaces as a mechanism used to mobilize certain partisans during elections. This topic is emotionally divisive, but only for Barak Obama. For John McCain, Table 5.11 displays that no emotional responses registered for him on this issue. The results present a different narrative than has been told in the past. Traditionally, morality controversies are divisive along predictable party lines. Here, there is another type of division occurred among racial lines.

Obama did not performed as well among white, conservative, religious men (Crotty 2009). This was due to this to why the Republican agenda includes morality issues as a means to mobilize them to vote (Pomper 2007). However, the issue of same-sex marriage is not particularly supported by black religious voters; as Hull (2006) observed, "most people opposing same sex marriage in Massachusetts and San Francisco are black" (Hull, 109) the data in Table 5.12 may reflect this attitude among black voters. There are some other contextual issues to consider in these results.

Table 5.11: The Influence of Feelings Towards John McCain on Attitudes about Same-Sex Marriage in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to John McCain | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.070 | 0.75 |
| Fear | | 0.185 | 0.42 |
| Hope | | 0.002 | 0.99 |
| Pride | | 0.060 | 0.80 |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | -0.100 | 0.11 |
| Ideology | | -0.701 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.026 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | 0.213 | 0.27 |
| Race | | -0.510 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.002 | 0.87 |
| Marital Status | | 0.108 | 0.06** |
| Constant | 4.936 | | |
| Number of Cases | 638 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 222.25 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2562 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -322.586 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry, or do you think they should not be allowed to marry?" 0=should not be allowed, 1=should be allowed

While the political landscape in 2008 favored the Democrats, the issue of same-sex marriage coupled with Obama's pledge to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) is a wedge issue for the Democratic base (Smith, DeSantis and Kassel 2006; Herring 2010) Looking at the results for the emotion of pride, the respondents who said that Obama made him or her feel proud, indicated that they did not support same sex marriage. This may seem counterintuitive for a segment of the electorate who support Obama to differ from his position on this issue. Upon closer inspection, there may be other contributing factors to the attitudes expressed here. When factored out, the control for race in this model suggests what the literature has stated, black

voters did not support the issue of same-sex marriage even though they voted for Obama. One interpretation implies that black voters felt racial solidarity about Obama's candidacy, but on this particular issue, based on religious foundations that oppose same sex marriage, black voters did not support the issue in 2008 (Hull 2006; Smith; DeSantis and Kassel 2006; Herring 2010).

Table 5.12: The Influence of Feelings toward Barak Obama on Same-Sex Marriage in 2008

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|--|----------|---------|-------------|
| Emotional Response to Barak Obama | | ***** | ***** |
| Anger | | 0.136 | 0.56 |
| Fear | | 0.038 | 0.08** |
| Hope | | 1.024 | 0.00* |
| Pride | | -0.490 | 0.05** |
| Political Variables | | ***** | ***** |
| Partisan Strength | | -0.069 | 0.27 |
| Ideology | | -0.682 | 0.00* |
| Demographics | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.027 | 0.00* |
| Gender | | 0.260 | 0.19 |
| Race | | -0.617 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.011 | 0.80 |
| Marital Status | | 0.101 | 0.08 |
| Constant | 4.782 | | |
| Number of Cases | 638 | ***** | ***** |
| LR Chi squared (14) | 241.28 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > Chi ² | 0.000 | ***** | ***** |
| Pseudo R ² | 0.2775 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | -313.716 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, ** P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "Should same-sex couples be allowed to marry, or do you think they should not be allowed to marry?" 0=should not be allowed, 1=should be allowed

As expected, voters who indicated that Obama made him or her feel hope also reported that they supported same-sex marriage. The negative feelings of fear reported here also performed in the model as expected, especially as the backdrop of Obama's public support for repealing DADT. Given the military environment that the 2008 campaign was still engendering, respondents who said that Obama makes them feel fearful also indicated that they did not

support same-sex marriage. This could quite possibly be the backlash to the DADT announcement.

The Special Case of Race and Gender in the 2008 Presidential Election

In October 2008, The Dole Institute of Politics at the University of Kansas hosted a scholars' roundtable to discuss forecasts of the November election. When a question implored panelists to offer a prophecy about the impending election, one answered, "We [the American electorate] may be a little more sexist than we are racist."

In the campaign, the role women and racial minorities was the nucleus of that election. As mentioned previously with the issue of black Americans, other racial groups and women were challenged with viewing themselves individually or as a group. This is not an issue that was reconciled in the 2008 presidential campaign. The competitive Democratic primary between Hillary Clinton and Barak Obama, coupled with the Republican's first nomination of woman, Sarah Palin, for Vice President, created an indelible historical political setting that confronted voter with questions regarding group politics versus individual politics. The campaign mobilized populations that have traditionally been viewed as secondary to mainstream American politics.

The election gave racial minorities and women a pivotal and visible role in the campaign. The question explored here is did *women and racial groups respond to the 2008 candidates differently than the mainstream electorate?* To test this question, the ANES's feeling thermometers for Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, Barak Obama, Joseph Biden and John McCain were regressed against controls for race and gender, controlling for party identification and demographic profile information. This was done to measure voters' feelings of likability toward the candidate.

In this section, gender and race will be discussed separately. Race and gender were extremely visible in the 2008 primary and general election. Therefore, they need to be addressed separately to assess the unique impacts on the outcome of the presidential election. As Junn (2009) qualified it, “Clinton stood in for gender, representing all women while Obama took his place in the category of race, standing in for all people of color” (Junn, 105). The vivid representation of race and gender was a source of pride for many women and minority voters.

Table 5.13: Feelings Toward Hilary Clinton based on Race and Gender

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.24 | 0.80 |
| Gender | 4.84 | 0.00* |
| Race: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Black | 16.59 | 0.00* |
| White | 5.36 | 0.08** |
| Native American | 7.34 | 0.52 |
| Black & Other | 1.60 | 0.93 |
| White/Blake & Other | 0.22 | 0.99 |
| Latino | 6.92 | 0.00* |
| Demographics: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.03 | 0.59 |
| Income | -0.54 | 0.00* |
| Education | -0.04 | 0.90 |
| Marital Status | -4.84 | 0.01* |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | 936 | ***** |
| Prob >F | 0.00 | ***** |
| Prob R ² | 0.12 | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.11 | ***** |
| Root MSE | 25.91 | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question : “ How would you rate Hillary Clinton?” response range, 0-100

Table 5.14: Feelings Toward Sarah Palin Based on Race and Gender

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|----------------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | -2.44 | 0.02* |
| Gender | | 1.70 | 0.38 |
| Race: ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Black | | -16.87 | 0.00* |
| White | | -5.48 | 0.12 |
| Native American | | 8.64 | 0.52 |
| Black & Other | | -28.48 | 0.14 |
| White/Black & Other | | -35.48 | 0.06** |
| Latino | | -2.59 | 0.37 |
| Demographics: ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | 0.19 | 0.00* |
| Income | | 0.67 | 0.00* |
| Education | | -0.86 | 0.06** |
| Marital Status | | 0.57 | 0.80 |
| Constant | | | |
| Number of Cases | 798 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > F | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob R ² | 0.10 | ***** | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.08 | ***** | ***** |
| Log Likelihood | 27.20 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question “How would you rate Sarah Palin?”
response range, 0-100

Gender:

This research is focused on voters’ responses to all candidates in 2008 (not just women candidates). This particular approach examines gendered behavior in the electorate that has, historically, contributed to the gender gap, which visibly emerged in the 1976 Carter campaign (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2007). Previous research has been mostly concerned with the behavior of women candidates and this treatment of campaigns (Carroll 2001). This was no less true in 2008, because both Clinton’s and Palin’s campaigns received a great deal of journalistic and academic attention. Previous research has also discussed the ‘gender gap’ both in the electorate (in voting behavior) and representative institutions (a gender gap in elected officials).

In terms of voting behavior, women vote at higher rates now than do men (Junn 2009). In 2008, women outpaced men in voter turnout, with white women more than seven percent more likely than white men to vote. The gender gap among black voters was non-existent, with black men being as likely to vote as black women (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010). In terms of women candidates, a lingering assumption is that women voters will vote more often for women candidates (Rozell 2000; Carroll 2001; Elder 2004 Dolan 2008). This proved to be more accurate in previous election cycles than in 2008. Most of the data in support this observation is at the state level and not in national elections (Dolan 2008). If evidence suggests that the gender gap in voting behavior is closing, the findings here offer support to advance this conclusion.

One of the enduring challenges that women candidates experience is the intensified scrutiny while campaigning, women's identities as aspiring political leaders continuing to be problematic (Kropf and Boiney 2001; Niven and Zilber 2001; Carlin and Winfrey 2009; Lawless 2009). If women are perceived as too feminine, they are judged as incompetent. If they are perceived too masculine, they are not likeable (McGinley 2009). Both Clinton and Palin performed gendered political identities while campaigning. They each performed femininity, albeit by different methods, and they also performed as political leaders. Clinton was scrutinized for not being feminine "enough." Her expression of tearful emotion on the eve of the New Hampshire primary softened her perception to voters, her victory being attributed to voters' perception of her. To voters, her emotional display had made her more "human" and thus, more likeable. Palin on the other hand, tried to achieve a stability between the perceptions of her as an assertive political leader, while maintaining her femininity through primarily the image of wife and mother and was even self-referential of her beauty pageant history (Carlin and Winfrey 2009; McGinley 2009). In the end, her image on the campaign trail devolved into perceived

political incompetence and voters, especially women, judged her harshly. The question is, did voters' respond favorably or harshly to these gendered performances in the political arena? Tables 5.13, 5.14 and 5.18 display interesting results for the category of gender on the likability measures for Clinton, Palin and Biden.

Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden were popular candidates among women voters. Sarah Palin did not do as well as expected among women. The results displayed for Palin in Table 5.14 show that she did very well among the party base more than among women. This is not unexpected since Palin had been an active participant in the right-wing religious circles before she was named McCain's running mate, which appealed to the conservative base (Eisenstein 2009). The heavily anticipated "Palin Effect", the anticipated draw of support from women voters, was not discernable. After Clinton suspended her campaign, Republicans hoped the political bounce from Clinton defectors switching to support Palin. Palin was presented as an alternative to those women who wanted to see a female on the ticket; any ticket (Eisenstein 136, 2009). This did not come to fruition as Table 5.16 shows; Clinton supporters ended up towing the party line and supported Barak Obama in the general election.

Although Palin was a breakthrough candidate for the GOP, she did not display the requisite experience or political awareness needed for the office. Palin also alienated many women with some of her positions on women's rights (Aarons-Mele 2008). For Republicans, Palin represented a new example of a conservative Republican woman and that left an indelible impression on the party. In comparison, Clinton was an accomplished lawyer and politician with experience. She served in the U.S. Senate and had a better record on women's issue (Eisenstein 2009; McGinley 2009).

Biden's popularity among women voters was most likely because his established pro-woman record. He is a pro-choice Catholic and has been honest about his support for same-sex marriage. Biden sponsored the Violence Against Women Act, which was the first federal legislation that acknowledged and problematized violence against women (Schneider 1996). Next, Biden was on record for supporting the Civil Rights Bill for Women that protected women from hate crimes and defamation, a mechanism to combat sex trafficking in the U.S. (Thomas 1995) Additionally, women were sympathetic to Biden's personal story concerning the loss his first wife and daughter in a fatal car accident, and remaining a single father for several years (Aarons-Mele 2008). Many women related to the challenges of single parenting and were presumably sympathetic toward his personal experiences.

On a side note, many women thought Biden was attractive. So much so President Obama remarked on in October 2010, at the Democratic National Committee Rally in Philadelphia:

"You know, I want you to know, when I was still campaigning, right after I selected Joe, I—we went out and we were doing some events and small town hall meetings. And everywhere we went with Joe, some woman would come by and say, you know, I think Joe's kind of cute. Can you introduce me to Joe? That was true. And I had to inform this woman that Joe is married to a wonderful Jill Biden"—President Obama, Philadelphia, PA

Cultivating electoral support from women voters in 2008 was crucial to the campaign and women voters appeared to scrutinize the differences between pro-woman rhetoric and pro-woman legislative records. Once Clinton suspended her race, Biden was the only viable pro-woman candidate with a legislative record that validated the Democrats' pro-woman agenda. Palin had difficulty reconciling her conservative ideology with her appeal to women voters, especially after Clinton dropped out.

Table 5.15: Feelings Toward Barak Obama Based on Race and Gender

| Independent Variable | | β | Probability |
|----------------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | | 0.56 | 0.55 |
| Gender | | 2.58 | 0.12 |
| Race: ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Black | | 30.05 | 0.00* |
| White | | 4.90 | 0.10** |
| Native American | | 6.12 | 0.59 |
| Black & Other | | 28.87 | 0.11 |
| White/Black & Other | | 33.63 | 0.06** |
| Latino | | 8.22 | 0.00* |
| Demographics: ***** | | ***** | ***** |
| Age | | -0.21 | 0.00* |
| Income | | -0.68 | 0.00* |
| Education | | 0.82 | 0.03* |
| Marital Status | | -1.67 | 0.38 |
| Constant | | | |
| Number of Cases | 929 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > F | 0.00 | ***** | ***** |
| Prob > R ² | 0.24 | ***** | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.23 | ***** | ***** |
| Root MSE | 25.24 | ***** | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "How would you rate Barak Obama?"
response range, 0-100

**Table 5.16: Feelings Toward Barak Obama Based on
Support for Hillary Clinton in Democratic Primaries**

| Independent Variables | β | Probability |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Hilary Clinton Feeling Thermometer | 0.48 | 0.00* |
| Party Identification | 0.46 | 0.57 |
| Gender | 0.33 | 0.82 |
| Race: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Black | 21.97 | 0.00* |
| White | 2.44 | 0.35 |
| Native American | 2.64 | 0.78 |
| Black & Other | 28.31 | 0.07** |
| White/Black & Other | 33.53 | 0.03* |
| Latino | 4.63 | 0.04* |
| Demographics: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.22 | 0.00* |
| Income | -0.42 | 0.00* |
| Education | 0.85 | 0.01* |
| Marital Status | 0.71 | 0.67 |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | 928 | ***** |
| Prob > F | 0.00 | ***** |
| Prob > R ² | 0.43 | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.42 | ***** |
| Root MSE | 21.87 | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "How would you rate Barak Obama?"
response range, 0-100

Table 5.17: Feelings Toward John McCain Based on Race and Gender

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------|
| ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | -1.49 | 0.09** |
| Gender | -1.72 | 0.28 |
| Race: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Black | -15.64 | 0.00* |
| White | -6.36 | 0.02* |
| Native American | 2.14 | 0.84 |
| Black & Other | -32.35 | 0.05* |
| White/Black & Other | -23.28 | 0.17 |
| Latino | 1.49 | 0.53 |
| Demographics: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Age | 0.16 | 0.00* |
| Income | 0.29 | 0.09** |
| Education | 0.57 | 0.12 |
| Marital Status | 0.92 | 0.61 |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | 928 | ***** |
| Prob >F | 0.00 | ***** |
| Prob >R ² | 0.11 | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.09 | ***** |
| Root MSE | 23.93 | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "How would you rate John McCain?"
response range, 0-100

Race:

The election of Barak Obama is more complex than a symbolic achievement of racial solidarity. While the data supports an interpretation of racial solidarity, it is noteworthy to acknowledge the racial complexities of the 2008 presidential campaign. The findings do suggest the saliency for analyzing the political power of racial groups in the 2008 campaign (Huddy and Carey 2009). While Obama received nearly universal support from several ethnic groups, there were still divisions among ethnic communities about the implications of Obama's first term for

the strategies that would improve the status of social, racial and political minority groups (Harris 2009).

The results show that, across all models, racial identities were very important determinants on liking or disliking particular candidates. The results also indicate that feelings toward candidates were divided along traditional and familiar groups. The Democrats tended to do well among racial minorities and women. Republicans performed well among whites, men, and wealthy and married persons. These models capture a heightened excitement among the racial groups that traditionally support the Democrats and also reflect the growing influence of the Latino population.

The primary elections of the 2008 campaign were highly gendered and racialized. During the primary campaign, Clinton enjoyed support from the racial electoral groups that had traditionally supported her husband, Bill Clinton (Barreto et al. 2008). Among the African American community, Bill Clinton was considered the first black president for several reasons. Clinton's personal speaking style appealed to African American voters because it mimicked a 'black style' of preaching, which appealed to African American nostalgia (Reed 2010). In addition to personal charisma, several of Clinton's political policies benefitted the African American communities (Reed 2010). These reasons are why Bill Clinton secured a loyal support base among black voters since his initial presidential campaign in 1992.

In 2008, the voting groups that supported Bill Clinton were larger. For example, Latinos made up 15 percent of the population, Blacks made up 13 percent and Asian Americans constituted 5 percent (Tolbert 2010). This research shows that blacks, whites and Latinos all supported Hillary Clinton: all three controls for racial identity were significant, particularly among blacks and Latinos.

Women responded very positively to Hillary Clinton's candidacy, while there was no response to Obama, this was not for negative reasons. It is for reasons mentioned earlier about the shrinking gender gap that was documented in 2008. Taking that into account, the presence of gender as a factor in liking Hillary Clinton was significant. The importance of racial groups in politics is demonstrated as factors for liking Clinton and Obama and factors of dislike toward the Republican ticket

2008 signaled the growing influence of Latino voters with data for these populations indicating movement toward stronger female voting involvement and turnout (Junn 2009). Clinton also drew support from low-income voters, a socioeconomic group where Latinos and, to a lesser degree, African-Americans are overrepresented (Barreto et.al 2008; Tolbert 2010) When Clinton announced that she suspended her political campaign in June 2008, anxiety about the loyalties of her coalition were inevitably discussed in the media and in closed-door conversations among Obama's team. Like Clinton's supporters, Latinos ended up supporting Obama in the general election.

Table 5.15 displays results for voter likability among gender and racial groups for Obama. Interestingly, gender does not appear to be a significant determinant for liking Obama. Knowing that more women voted for Obama than men, this was not a result to be interpreted negatively toward Obama. Other categories there were important also reflect the familiar party profile; Obama did well among young, unmarried, low income and educated voters.

Racial groups responded in familiar fashions to Obama and the results indicate that racial identity produced very enthusiastic expressions toward Obama. All racial categories except two were statistically significant on likability and, among black and Latino populations, he had universal support. White voters liked Obama for any one of three reasons. First, the *white*

enthusiasm thesis may have had a role in voters liking Obama. Second, white Democrats (men more than women) were expected to support whoever won the party's nomination. Third, the selection of Biden as Vice President was helpful in attracting restless Democrats and Independents.

Table 5.18: Feelings Toward Joseph Biden Based on Race and Gender

| Independent Variable | β | Probability |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------|
| ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Party Identification | 0.89 | 0.35 |
| Gender | 4.02 | 0.01* |
| Race: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Black | 21.45 | 0.00* |
| White | 3.55 | 0.27 |
| Native American | -8.22 | 0.52 |
| Black & Other | 16.84 | 0.45 |
| White/Black & Other | 18.00 | 0.25 |
| Latino | 4.04 | 0.11 |
| Demographics: ***** | ***** | ***** |
| Age | -0.05 | 0.31 |
| Income | -0.49 | 0.01* |
| Education | 0.80 | 0.05* |
| Marital Status | -0.47 | 0.81 |
| Constant | | |
| Number of Cases | 697 | ***** |
| Prob > F | 0.00 | ***** |
| Prob > R ² | 0.17 | ***** |
| Adj R ² | 0.15 | ***** |
| Root MSE | 22.22 | ***** |

*P<.05, *P<.10

Dependent variable based on survey responses to the question: "How would you rate Joseph Biden?"
response range, 0-100

Biden was a racially sheltered choice with political experience, which was a reassuring presence on the ticket (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 2009; Crotty 2009; Sabato 2010). Some analysis hypothesized that Biden was selected for racial balance. Biden was selected more for his political tenure and experience particularly on foreign policy. The number of voters who were

reassured by his ‘whiteness’ was probably small when compared to the number of voters that were reassured by the balance of political experience. If Biden was selected for his ‘whiteness’ to offset doubters about Obama’s racial identity, then white racial identity should have been a significant factor contributing to Biden’s likability in table 5.18. This is not the case, just the opposite, Black racial identity was a significant factor in liking Biden. This may have been more important to the context of the 2008 campaign because while Biden helped offset some Obama’s political inexperience, the results suggest that the black community universally supported the Democratic ticket and voters who liked and trusted Obama, also liked and trusted Biden (Crotty 2009).

On the Republican ticket, there is little difference among voters between McCain and Palin in terms of likeability. The factors that determined liking the candidates rested primarily on party identification and not gender. Gender did not matter in voters’ liking either McCain or Palin. What was significant in terms of racial identities, were the racial groups that did not like the Republican ticket. In both models displayed in tables 5.14 and 5.17, Black, Latino and other classifications were significant factors disliking McCain and Palin. For McCain, an interesting finding was that he did not perform as well among white voters. This result offers additional support for the *white enthusiasm* thesis explaining why so many white voters supported Obama. It can also be said that the Republican candidates mobilized the party base, but did not successfully persuade the Independents, Independent leaners and potential Democrat defectors. In this research, there is no data to suggest that there were Republican defectors who crossed party lines to support Obama. Both Republican candidates, however, did well among older, wealthy, married voters, which fit the expected outcome for the party profile.

I now return to the analysis of the central research question; *do women and racial groups respond to the 2008 candidates differently than the mainstream electorate?* As it is understood, the label *American voter* has typically referred to the middle-upper class white-male voter. The results here find that women and racial sub-groups expressed more enthusiasm toward political candidates in 2008 and were more mobilized than four years earlier. These findings also confirm the reversed gender gap where women outpace men. There is also enough evidence here to suggest a racial gap, where non-white voters may begin to outpace white voters. The effects were observed over several categories of traditional demographic variables, particularly among the young, unmarried and low-income and Latino voters.

Discussion and Conclusion:

Reviewing the dynamics of the 2008 presidential race, it is not a surprise that Barack Obama was elected president. Voters were clear in 2008 that they were poised for something different, which, given the context, made the Democratic strategy very effective. The conditions that favored a Democrat victory are multi-dimensional. The results in this support the analysis that the 2008 presidential election was a referendum of the Bush administration. The election forecast models indicated a correlation between presidential approval, retrospective evaluations, economic conditions and vote choice (Abramowitz 2008; Cuzan and Bundrick 2008; Holbrook 2008). Since there was no incumbent running for president, linking McCain to Bush proved to be an advantageous strategy for the Democrats because it enabled voters to evaluate the previous president's performance and project those evaluations onto McCain. Retrospective voting and blaming the incumbent party were aided by other strategic advantages for the Democratic Party.

This research expands on insights gained in the previous chapter. The role emotion had in an election that witnessed unprecedented enthusiasm and energy from multiple voting blocks of

the electorate is important to note. On this point, there are three observations that give insights to the political behavior of 2008. First, the results in this chapter support the 2008 referendum thesis. Second, the intensity of emotion expressed towards candidates during campaigns may indicate the severity of political polarization. The election of 2008 was not as ideologically or emotionally polarized as 2004. Third, the level of racial and gendered enthusiasm may have been interpreted as emotional expression, but enthusiasm and the impact of feelings on political attitudes is not the same thing. However, it is reasonable to conclude that expressions of enthusiasm about Obama's candidacy were funneled or transformed into emotional expressions of hope toward Obama.

Regarding voting behavior in 2008 and the referendum, the premise that certain feelings are associated with retrospective evaluations is consistent, especially in an election like 2008. There is a positive correlation between voters' feelings and their retrospective and prospective political evaluations on Bush in 2008. Especially on the issues of health care, foreign relations and the war in Iraq, on these issues, the emotions expressed toward McCain likely channeled negative evaluations of Bush. This case is also made stronger by the fact that the wording of the ANES survey questions directly asked voters to consider their thoughts about Bush's performance in his second term. Considering survey question phrasing, retrospective judgments, and the Obama strategy, the emotions expressed toward McCain support the conclusion that 2008 was also a referendum election.

The electorate was not as severely polarized in 2008 as it was in 2004. The evidence for this is presented in previous sections (see tables starting at 5.1). In 2004 recall that feelings expressed toward George W. Bush were consistently significant on all four ANES emotional dimensions, on most issues. During 2008, this was not the case, respondents' feelings toward

McCain registering consistently on two of the four ANES emotional dimensions. For Obama, respondents' feelings consistently registered on only one dimension, the feeling of hope. While voters' were still polarized in 2008 as supported by the evidence from the results for McCain (respondents were mostly divided between the feelings of hope and fear) these divisions were less severe than the ones for 2004.

McCain's political misfortune was precipitated by ineffective campaign strategy and exacerbated by the rather wide "enthusiasm gap." Ceaser et al. report that 50 percent of the electorate reported feeling 'enthusiastic' about Obama compared to the 16 percent reported for McCain (Ceaser, Busch and Pitney 137). The enthusiasm expressed for Obama (and Clinton during the primary) was unprecedented because it represented groups of voters who in previous elections seemed invisible. It is difficult to measure any direct affect of enthusiasm about Obama on voters' support of political issues (partly due to limitations of testable emotions provided by ANES).

A compelling observation to note is the minimal backlash affect response to Obama. The Obama campaign strategists gave special attention to manage the message to curtail or neutralize possible racial backlash. Although, scholars on race (Reeves 1997; Campbell 2010) agree that there will always be an undercurrent of racism and recurrent sexism in American politics, if there was racial backlash in 2008, it was countered by the magnitude of enthusiasm expressed by most race groups. The palpable enthusiasm detected among several voting groups was also reflected in the tone of media coverage of Obama. Scholars observed that Obama's overwhelmingly positive media exposure might have muted any negative effects of racial backlash (Ceaser, Bush and Pitney 2009). Obama's campaign strategy successfully harnessed the electorate's enthusiasm and

channeled their energies into his winning coalition. They genuinely believed he was the change they hoped for.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Findings: the Importance of Voters' feelings in Response to Presidential Candidates in the 2004 and 2008 Elections

Campaigns are accustomed to the constraints imposed on them by the demand to advertise and the continually shrinking media slots, coupled with increased costs of the media purchase, which ultimately generates limited occasions to imprint on voters (Adatto 1990; Bucy 2007). Candidates need to compete for voters' attention in an era of highly accessible digital and social media and popular entertainment. In order to be viable competitors, candidates make themselves memorable by first establishing an emotional imprint on voters. The reach for voters' emotions rather than their minds has become the routine campaign strategy.¹⁴ The digital era constrains the time available to make an impression so candidates advertise to "win the hearts" of voters with the hope that "their minds will follow."¹⁵ Even if the mind does not follow suit, this research supports the conclusion that hearts guide the mind in electoral decisions.

The utility of an emotional appeal compensates for several obstacles presented to the contemporary campaign. The leading obstacle is a financial one—how to maximize effect with minimal cost (Hallin 1992). Research has shown that emotional responses are intertwined with memory cognition, there is a larger impact made in a shorter amount of time in the era of digital information. Second, along the same lines of maximizing the investment, emotional appeals are a strategic response to a well-funded opponent (Trent 2008; Hallin 1992).

Research related to this topic has established that emotions are important in political decision-making. Building on that foundation, the chief focus of this research examined the role emotion plays in voter assessment of political issues during presidential campaigns. Special

¹⁴ Analysis found at *The Living Room Candidate*

¹⁵ Not originally said of the context of American political elections, but first introduced into the political lexicon in the late 1960s about America's international military strategy in Indochina in the 1960s. See Robert D. Schulzinger's *In A Time for War*.

attention was given to examining how a voter's feeling toward a presidential candidate mediates his or her attitude on a campaign issue. Using the ANES data collected for the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, this question was investigated and compared across two presidential elections. Additionally, the unprecedented context of the presidential campaign in 2008 required closer examination of electoral subgroups like women and racial minorities in response to Obama's candidacy. Utilizing the measurements of the feeling thermometers and controlling for gender and race, candidate preferences favoring Obama were distinguishable along racial and gender categories. These trends suggest that voter turnout among electoral subgroups like women and racial minorities mattered to Obama's 2008 victory. The findings affirm the central question of the project; voters' feelings toward a presidential candidate likely inform their attitudes on the political issues involved in the campaign. This also suggests a firmly connected relationship between voters' emotional response to a candidate and issue evaluation, meaning that the cognitive processes that guide emotions and issue evaluations in political contexts are not mutually exclusives as previously understood.

Research in this area endeavors to understand voting in terms of vote choice as a consequence or a reflection of ideology, partisan affiliation, issues and candidates' personalities (Campbell et al. 1960). The traditional indicators, established by the *American Voter*, continue to be reliable devices in measuring voting behavior and studying elections. This project takes the application of those indicators further by adding the new variable of emotion to the utility of traditional variables to explain voter behavior and political decision-making. This project expands the traditional perspective for understanding patterns of voter evaluations by establishing that voters' feelings are important factors in political judgment.

Important Contributions

This project offers four significant contributions to the existing knowledge base about voting behavior and how important emotions are to making political evaluations. First, the findings affirm the central research question and suggest that feelings are sources of information in voters' decision-making. The feelings that voters have toward a particular candidate influence candidate appraisals. Those appraisals and feelings are then transferred to their evaluations of campaign issues. Second, the findings suggest that specific feelings are correlated with retrospective and prospective voting. Third, contrary to expectation, the results suggest that little difference exist between partisan and independent voters when expressing feelings about candidates and support for campaign issues. The findings suggested that partisan voters might feel more intensely about political candidates and campaign issues than non-affiliated voters. Fourth, this project expands the scope of traditional variables used to study voting behavior by adding the measurement of emotion as an indicator to enhance our continued research on voting behavior. In addition to these four contributions, there are two other noteworthy observations that warrant attention; first, the assumption about the standing gender gap between men and women is challenged and second, the variable controlling for marital status and what it explains about voting behavior has shifted in recent election cycles.

There were few differences observed between men and women regarding attitudes about campaign issues and feelings expressed toward a candidate. However, distinct differences emerged on specific campaign issues and expressions of candidate preference. Historically, the so-called "gender gap" typically referred to men's political participation outpacing women leaving women largely underrepresented in the political forum. However, that trend began to reverse in 1980, when women's political participation for the first time outpaced men

(Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 2010). Currently, the “gender gap” refers to the opposite trend, men’s participation lags behind that of women. Women now participate in politics in larger numbers than men, a trend evident in both the 2004 and 2008 elections.¹⁶ With regard to political behavior, women are more active than men and the data on the 2008 presidential campaign show that women were not only more active, but were mobilized in larger numbers than men. In terms of political issues, few overall differences were observed, but on specific campaign issues, gendered differences emerged. For example, on the issue of war, a split between men and women on support for war that emerged after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. In the 1992 election, more men than women supported the Gulf War. In 2004, a comparable trend was detected when more men than women, in general, supported war. Gender specific differences were measured on the issue of Afghanistan--women were less supportive than men of the war in Afghanistan. However, this gender specific difference was only observed on the issue of Afghanistan and not Iraq.

The other noticeable difference between men and women was on candidate preference. This was particularly evident in the 2008 campaign. More women than men expressed preference for Obama than McCain. The data show that 56% of women supported Barak Obama compared to 49% for McCain, which offers a compelling narrative about McCain’s strategy in selecting Sarah Palin as the GOP’s first woman candidate for Vice President. The nomination of Sarah Palin became a contentious issue itself during the campaign, one that proved unsuccessful in attracting the much sought after voting block of undecided women voters and Democrat women who may have felt abandoned by Hillary Clinton’s decision to suspend her presidential bid.

The second important observation provides insights to the category of marital status. The *American Voter* confirmed that marital status is an important predictor for voting behavior,

¹⁶ Pew Research Institute demographic reports for 2004 and 2008

because according to its findings, married couples were more likely to vote than their non-married counterparts (Campbell et.al 1960). In the decades since the publication of *The American Voter*, differences between married and non-married persons emerged, which hold implications for voting behavior. The increased trends of men and women not being married itself reflects the social changes of the past three decades and these changes have had inevitable political effects (Edlund and Pande 2002). According to Edlund and Pande (2002) factors that contributed to the rise of un-married status may include the availability of accessible contraception (especially for women), female participation in the labor force, progressive divorce laws, and the increase in social services made single-motherhood more sustainable. The research also indicated that the decline in marriage affected the political preferences of mostly working women, along with middle-income women, who were more likely to favor Democrats more so than poor or wealthy women (Edlund and Pande, 921). Evidence from the campaign cycles of 2004 and 2008 demonstrated perceptible differences between married and non-married persons in their attitudes toward particular campaign issues. In 2004, divergences emerged on the topics of the economy and the war in Afghanistan. On both issues non-married voters did not support Bush's handling of the economy or the war. In 2008, the difference in attitudes was especially noticeable on the topic of same-sex marriage. Support for same-sex marriage came mostly from moderate and liberal married women.

On balance, this project contributes an important variable to the list of indicators used to guide research on American voting behavior. Previous research has recognized that voters' feelings are important in political contexts. The findings in this project demonstrate that each of the feeling indicators as measured in the ANES data provides insights to voters' processes when evaluating political issues as guided by their feelings expressed toward a political candidate.

Specifically, the findings suggest a correlation between the negative feelings of anger or fear as and attitudes of disapproval. The same connection is observed between the positive feelings of pride or hope and attitudes of approval. This research establishes a foundation to support future research on the specific emotional contexts of retrospective and prospective voting.

There are valuable acumens gained from the comparisons between the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections. By comparing the two significantly different campaign periods and controlling for the political environment, deeper insights to voter responses to those political contexts are enriched. It is well understood and acknowledged that political environments of campaign periods vary between cycles. Varied political contexts affect electoral behavior. Previous studies have limited the research focus by examining a single presidential cycle (Marcus 1988; Finn and Glaser 2010). By analyzing and comparing both presidential elections, variations in patterns of voters' emotional responses toward different presidential candidates over time, are practical in rendering useful data that enhances our knowledge of the specific emotional conditions important in the process of voter decision making.

Conventional expectations during campaign cycles dictate that social issues like same-sex marriage or abortion evoke intense emotional responses because they activate moral judgments based on non-cognitive devises produced by concern based motivations (Swan 2004). In contrast, assessments of the substantive issues such as the economy or foreign relations are typically expected to engage a voter's cognitive devices. Contrary to these expectations, the findings here suggest that substantive issues involving judgments about topics like the economy and foreign relations are just as, if not more, emotive than the social agendas that are routinely exploited during political campaigns.

The research on the function of voters' feelings in political contexts helps illuminate the issues and contexts voters are responsive to during campaign periods. Previous research has found that voters perceive of the mood and tone of the political environment, the campaign, critical events, candidate traits and personalities (Claibourn 2011). Studying the affective feelings expressed toward a candidate in specific political contexts reveals a great deal about the dynamics of a particular campaign as well as the traits of a candidate. The observations made in this project sustain that explanation and demonstrate that political campaigns and related strategies matter in terms of voters' feelings about politics and the personalities involved (Lodge and Steenbergen 1995).

Implications for the 2012 Election

The 2012 presidential election was an important referendum on Obama's historic first term. The political environment was not as emotive as it was four years ago, there were still consistent, positive feelings measured about Obama. The electoral outcome indicates several important effects experienced by the re-election campaign. Obama's re-election suggests that he sustained the coalition of support that was critical to his 2008 campaign. Electoral subgroups involving women, African-Americans, Asian, Latino and youth voters overwhelmingly supported Obama. The 2012 campaign also highlighted the changing demographics of the American electorate, which was seen in each candidate's profile of supporters. The electoral subgroup made up of Asian voters played a particularly important role in Obama's victory in 2012. The voting turnout among non-white was up from 26% in 2008 to 28% and Obama received 80% of the non-white voter support. The youthful enthusiasm was noticeably muted in 2012, but Obama still attracted voters between the ages of 18-24. Turnout was down about 6% from 2008, but younger voters supported Obama with 60% compared to Romney with 37%. The

following paragraphs examine the political behavior of two key electoral subgroups that are important to this research project, women and black voters.

The women's vote was arguably more significant to the electoral outcome in 2012 than four years ago. Both parties recognized the importance of the electorally inversed "gender gap" where women out-pace men in voter registration and political participation. Not only do women out pace men in voting, but also in recent elections, men and women have split their votes along gendered lines.¹⁷ Both parties recognized the consequences of marginalizing women, racial and ethnic minority voters. The results indicated that the Democrats were successful in appealing to women voters. The election results show that women favored Obama at 55% compared to Romney at 44%.¹⁸ Even when the race grew tight and even tied in the final weeks before the election, Obama enjoyed a larger margin of support from women and single mothers. However, a majority of white women voters favored Romney. There is not much different from the voting behavior of white women in 2008.¹⁹

The 2008 economic crisis affected men and women disproportionately. Single head-of-household mothers were critical voters. For many women in 2012, social issues like reproductive health policy framed as the GOP "war on women" were supplanted by more immediate needs presented by the economic crisis and the Great Recession.²⁰ Women, at higher rates than men, absorbed the burden of unemployment. Economic data indicated that more women than men lost their jobs between 2009 and 2011 and the recovery trends favored men, meaning men were able

¹⁷ 1996, 2000 and 2004

¹⁸ Pew Research Center for the People and the Press-public opinion favorability poll; Washington Post favorability ratings May 23-27 2012.

¹⁹ New York Times favorability ratings July 23-27 2012.

²⁰ Presidential forecast analysis for 2012 found at the Roper Center for Public Opinion at www.ropercenter.uconn.edu

to recover lost income more quickly than women.²¹ This trend coupled with the fact that women also undertake a disproportionate share of family care-work (Bittman et al. 2003) ultimately meant slower economic recovery for women, which translated into electoral support for Obama.

The referendum on Obama's first term has some important implications about racial attitudes and voters' feelings about racial minorities in politics. Obama's weak support among white voters was offset by his electoral advantage among racial and ethnic minority subgroups. While public opinion surveys tried to tap attitudes indicating racial backlash in 2008, data suggested that such attitudes were either neutralized or absent in that election (Rowe 2010). After the 2012 election, public opinion researchers will return to those same questions to examine the racial resentment thesis.

The racial resentment thesis may be situated in effects of internalized ideology according to Feldman and Huddy (2005), who found that it was difficult to disentangle concepts of racial resentment from ideology. They observed that the challenge stemmed from the internalization of individualistic social philosophies (self-reliance, hard work, etc.) that are infused into the conservative ideology as evidenced by the political messages advanced by Vice Presidential candidate, Paul Ryan's conservative stumping. When surveyed, conservatives are expected to agree with ideas that implicate racial resentment on the grounds of conservative ideology (Feldman and Huddy 2005).

If this is the case, the re-election campaign may reveal a concept of "new racism", which falls under the rubric of racial resentment, a subtle racial prejudice that is conveyed through white opposition to black policy positions (Feldman and Huddy 169). While the current social and political environment appears to be a more tolerant climate, racial subtleties may be revealed

²¹ Pew Research Center; www.pewresearch.org; July 2011 social and demographic trends report by Rakesh Kochar.

in voter attitudes expressed about Obama's economic policies of his first term. It is expected that conservative Republican voters expressed negative feelings toward Obama's economic policies. In 2012, surveys may tap Romney supporters' feelings that show an association with anger that was transferred to their retrospective evaluations of Obama. If Republican voters and other Romney supporters demonstrate this correlation, it is likely that feelings of anger will also be transferred to their evaluations of the issues on the economy and health care.

The political environment that underscored the 2012 campaign was not as emotive as it was four years ago. Despite the perceived policy successes of Obama's first term, the economy dominated the political agenda. Campaigns generate their own chemistry and voters are either attracted to or repulsed by a campaign's chemistry. The candidate generates a large portion of the campaign's chemistry. As in previous presidential campaigns, the candidates' personalities, campaign issues and ideological appeals are important factors in facilitating positive electoral chemistry with voters. As mentioned earlier, the political environment coupled with the campaign chemistry, matters to how voters perceive and feel about the candidates.

Regarding candidates' personalities and emotional attributes, Romney struggled with criticism of his personal image on the campaign, which was perceived more negatively than Obama.²² Romney was perceived as cold and disconnected, which were reinforced by several verbal missteps and political gaffs, which alienated many important voting groups including women and middle class voters. According to public opinion data available the week of the election, even though Obama's energy and enthusiasm was noticeably muted, he held a steady lead among women and non-white voters.²³

²² Pew Research Center for the People and the Press; www.pewresearch.org; July 2012 public opinion survey results

²³ Pew Research Center; www.pewresearch.org; November 2012 public opinion survey results

Future research may build on the findings in this project by exploring how ANES surveys tapped into voters' feelings toward Obama and Romney in the 2012 campaign, and more specifically, responses may likely reflect a pronounced retrospective assessment of Obama than a prospective evaluation. Obama, in the 2012 campaign, was successful in demonstrating that he experienced success in his first term. Coupled with his response to hurricane Sandy, he generated confidence among the partisan base and possibly established credibility among undecided voters, even among those who were reluctant and doubtful about voting for Obama. If that was the case, then results may show that Obama was effective in sustaining voters' positive feelings toward him, which then were transferred to evaluations of pride (retrospective voting assessment).

This project offers evidence that supports the observation that voters' negative feelings are associated with retrospective voting and also have a tendency to influence attitudes of disapproval. Obama's campaign team demonstrated that they understood this when it crafted the campaign message "Forward" presumably with the aim to frame the campaign like in 2008 to encourage the voters to associate their feelings of hope and fear (of economic uncertainty) with approval of Obama.

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